

Horizon

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

**T. S. ELIOT ON THE
CONDITION OF MAN TODAY**

by J. P. HODIN

THORNTON WILDER'S THEATRE

by H. ADLER

JACQUES VILLON

by RAYMOND MORTIMER

NOVELIST-PHILOSOPHERS

V—JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

(conclusion)

by A. J. AYER

**MEMOIRS OF THE LATE PRINCESSE
EDMOND DE POLIGNAC**

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EDITH SITWELL

EURYDICE

For John Lehmann

Fires on the hearth! Fires in the heavens! Fires in the hearts of Men,
who was welded into bright gold in the earth by Death
salute you! All the weight of Death in all the world
yet does not equal Love—the great compassion
for the fallen dust and all fallen creatures, quickening
As is the Sun in the void firmament.
It shines like fire. O bright gold of the heat of the Sun
Of Love across dark fields—burning away rough husks of Death
till all is fire, and bringing all to harvest!

See then! I stand in the centre of my earth
That was my Death, under the zenith of my Sun
Bringing a word from Darkness
That Death too has compassion for all fallen Nature.
For as the Sun buries his hot days and rays
To ripen, so the great rays of the heart
Are ripened to wisdom by Death, and great is our forgiveness.

When through the darkness Orpheus came with his Sun-like
singing
like the movements in the heavens that, in our blindness
Could we but emulate, would set right our lives—
came to the mouth of the Tomb . . . I did not know our meeting
would be this:
—Only like the return at evening
Of the weary worker in the holy field—
The cry of welcome, the remembered kiss!

in the lateness of the season, I with the golden feet
That had walked in the fields of Death, now walk again
The dark fields where the sowers scatter grain
like tears, or the constellations that weep for the lateness of the
season—
Where the women walk like mourners, like the Afternoon
ripened, with their bent heads;

Their golden eyelids like the drifts of the narcissus
In spring, are wet with their tears. They mourn for a young wife
who had walked these fields,

—So young, not yet had Proserpina tied up her golden hair
In a knot like the branchèd corn . . . So good was she
With a voice like the sweet swallow. She lies in the silent Tomb

And they walk in the fields alone. Then one of the Dead who lay
Beneath the earth, like the water-dark, the water-thin
Effigy of Osiris, with a face green as a moon,
—He who was lying in darkness with the wheat
Like a flame springing from his heart, or a gold sound,
Said to me 'We have been blind and stripped God naked of
things

To see the light which shines in the dark, and we have learned
That the gold flame of the wheat may spring from a barren
heart.'

When I came down from the Metropolis of the Corn
Then said the ferine dust that reared about me
'I have the famine of the lion, all things devour,
Or make them mine . . . Venus was powerful as me—
Now is she but a handful of dry amber dust;
And my tooth cracked the husk, the dry amber wall
That held the fire of the wheat. That fire is gone!
And remember this, that Love, or I, have ground
Your heart between the stones of the years, like wheat.'

But as I left the mouth of the Tomb, far off, like the noise of the
dark wild bees,
I heard the sounds arise from the dwellings of Men, and I thought
of their building,
Their wars, their money-making, and of the gold roofs built
against Darkness.

And I had learned beneath the earth that all gold nature
Changes to wheat or gold in the sweet darkness.
Why do they weep for those in the silent Tomb,
Dropping their tears like grain? 'Her heart, that honeycomb,

Thick Darkness like a bear devours . . . See, all the gold is gone!
The cell of the honey-comb is six-sided . . . But there, in the five
cells of the senses

Are stored all their gold . . . Where is it now? Only the wind of
the Tomb can know.'

But I feared not that stilled and chilling breath
Among the dust . . . Love is not changed by Death,
And nothing is lost and all in the end is harvest.

As the earth is heavy with the lion-strong Sun
When he has fallen, with his hot days and rays,
We are heavy with Death, as a woman is heavy with child.
As the corn-husks hold its ripeness, the gold comb
Its weight of summer. . . . But as if a lump of gold had changed to
corn,

So did my Life rise from my Death. I cast the grandeur of
Death away

And homeward came to the small things of Love, the building
of the hearth, the kneading of daily bread,
The cries of birth, and all the weight of light
Shaping our bodies and our souls. . . . Came home to youth,
And the noise of summer growing in the veins,
And to old age, a serene afternoon.
An element beyond time, or a new climate.

I with the other young who were born from darkness,
Returning to darkness, stood at the mouth of the Tomb
With one who had come glittering like the wind
To meet me—Orpheus with the golden mouth,
You—like Adonis born from the young myrrh-tree, you, the
vine-branch

Broken by the wind of love . . . I turned to greet you—
And when I touched your mouth, it was the Sun.

NOTES

Verse IV. Lines 9, 10, 11, 12.

' . . . A most sweet wife, a young wife, *Nondum sustulerat flavum Proserpina crinem* (not yet had Proserpina tied up her golden hair), such a wife as no man ever had, so good a wife, but she is now dead and gone, *Lethaeoque iacet condita sarcophago* (she lies buried in the silent tomb).'

ROBERT BURTON: *The Anatomy of Melancholy*

Verse V. Lines 6 and 7.

'The light which God is shines in darkness, God is the true light: to see it one has to be blind and strip God naked of things.'

MEISTER ECKHART: *Sermons and Collations XIX*

Verse IX. Line 3.

'And her deadness
Was filling her with fullness
Full as a fruit with sweetness and darkness
Was she with her great death.'

J. M. RILKE, translated by J. B. Leishman

JOHN LEHMANN

POEM

Yes, we are desperate men: our violence,
The blood that streams for our satanic creeds,
The mounting fury without heart or sense
Would straighten Time's deep wrong with crooked deeds,
Are but the twistings of trapped animals
That see the hunter with the knife advance,
Whose every struggle while the menace falls
Cuts the wound deeper, narrows the last chance.

This white, cold morning as I stamp across
The brittle garden to the boathouse shed,
I could believe we plunge towards a loss
More absolute than all the mounded dead
Have groaned to witness in uncounted wrecks
Of love and empire, and at dizzy pace
Our proud steel-plated world and polished decks
Splinter and vanish in the boiling race.

Such dark thoughts: while I ponder where they flow,
The winter sun behind the orchard trees
Has drawn blue shadows on the diamond snow,
And opening the great shed with icy keys
I breathe the pungent sweetness, ripe and raw,
Of the stored apples, and almost could explain
Here in the gloom among the trays and straw
Promise of something that will yet remain.

February 1945

A. FRENAUD

JACQUES VILLON

Le frêle vieillard construit des pyramides
La pyramide part de l'œil de mon esprit et va toucher l'œil de
mon cœur
La pyramide part de l'œil de mon cœur et fait lever la beauté
Aux quatre coins du monde
Entre toi et moi entre passé et futur entre l'espace et le temps
Et tout l'intervalle profond s'ordonne en triangles d'une
maçonnerie exquise
D'un rite pour les initiés du grand œuvre de la construction de
la réalité
Par le pouvoir de l'esprit
Mais vous êtes tous invités à comprendre et à aimer
Couleurs d'oiseaux de paradis perdu et retrouvé
Jaune comme la trompette du colza mauve des ans passés et des
forêts
Les toits rouges rire après l'hiver et le rose de l'innocence
crépusculaire
Les gris alizés progressent comme un réseau d'abeilles
La chanson chante de toutes les couleurs au bord des arêtes vives
Et mon œil est conduit par la main de source en source
Suivant la rigueur du mouvement des lignes et la chance de
l'inventeur
Et à la fin voici l'évènement
Dans ses géométries l'oiseleur a capté une petite ville et nous la
tend
Profonde et douce parfumée encore d'un village qu'elle fut
Soumise à sa coutume et gardée par un secret de candeur
Quotidienne sous la présence de l'invisible témoin
Petite ville de l'enfance et des quatre saisons
Ta jeunesse est la conquête d'une longue vie vaillante
Ton visage est le miroir de notre pays et de notre destinée
Enfermée dans les collines qu'écarte la fierté d'un sourire
O Jacques Villon la beauté est le rêve de ta force.

EDOUARD RODITI

MANHATTAN NOVELLETES

I

The Loreli with the spaghetti hair
Is strumming the raw-meat piano
While her heliotropic audience
Pays a thousand looks for every sound.

There, underneath those platformed feet,
Her rubber lover sweats pure oil;
He's jealous of his snoring neighbor,
The hairy Ainu with a died mink face.

They think her heels are round, because
Each one in turn has been her beau,
But neither long enough to know
That art's her love and love her art.

2

Nursing his beer until it boils,
The boy whose freedom cost a dime
Watches the blond with parrot voice
And hopes she'll whisper love at last.

This pretty polly knows her stuff,
Is no sad sister, leads the dance;
She'll trail her man through fog or fen
And turn her dollar, come what may.

And come who may, by hook or crook,
He'll think this houri's worth her price;
He'll never note, concealed beneath
The feathers smooth, bird-claw, bird beak.

3

The subway cowboy with a midnight tan
Texas of sex will nightly roam;
He'll sell his body to any devil
For a greenback dollar bill.

For a greenback dollar bill or two
He'd sell his soul. But who will pay
Visible coin for invisible wares,
Temporal for eternal, who?

All for a greenback dollar bill,
What West's can we discover yet
Who roam Manhattan's midnight range
From neonrise to neonset?

J. P. HODIN

T. S. ELIOT ON THE CONDITION OF MAN TODAY

SOME time has elapsed since I visited T. S. Eliot in his study at the offices of Messrs. Faber and Faber. The outlines of his personality stand out with increasing clearness in my memory; the first impression made upon me by this tall, lean man with a slight stoop, who extended to me his long fingers in greeting. A thin, aquiline nose gave his rather tired face the look of an immense

bird, which has returned from a distant flight and has perched here to rest. As if he divined what picture he had called up before me, T. S. Eliot smiled—a Voltairian smile. This smile and this bird-like appearance, these eyes, which only seem to be veiled, which are used to sharp analysis of things, to bring them into their right perspective and to evaluate them, these eyes are like precision instruments and occasionally like watchers which guard the secret of deep thoughts and tempestuous emotions.

He slowly poured a cup of tea for me, he pointed to some biscuits. We began to talk. My glance roamed round the typical publishers' offices. Books everywhere, on shelves, on the table. On the walls were some reproductions of Romanesque sculpture, from a rare drawing shone the great intelligent eyes of Goethe. Goethe, I thought, and said: *'Do you believe that Europe can recover as a cultural entity after this war?'*

He sank his head deeper between his shoulders. Then he said something, cautious, and I think out of politeness to me so that I might more easily understand: 'I think so . . . well, we have to aim at this surely . . . It may take a long time, with political interruptions. But there is a living force beneath. There are rather powerful forces against such an entity. But I believe it is a permanent thing.'

His conversation flows like waves to an fro. It is more like a monologue: 'Now especially, Europe means a number of small and moderate-sized nations, with some big ones on either side of them, America, Russia . . . To make culturally any sort of division between East and West is a mistake. I do not see it so. . . . There are different types and kinds and sizes of union. There is one cultural entity in western Europe and also a larger Europe which includes Russia. I think with Russia it is a matter of important influence from Russia rather than homogeneity with western Europe, because western Europe is composed of countries which have the same history. There is a history of Europe and not one of each country separately. But Russia's history is different. Russia has not gone through all the same mediaeval problems, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment which the western European nations share as history, and all the cultural, religious and artistic movements. There is nothing corresponding in the history of Russia. When I say Russia, I mean all the peoples composing the U.S.S.R.'

Do you think, for this reason, that there is a danger for Europe from the side of Russia?

Eliot looked up quickly. It was as if he would say: I hope we understand each other. We are speaking about questions of culture, we are not speaking about power politics: 'We need a very much longer time lag in culture than in politics. It is just as likely that Russia's influence would bring more good than harm. I should say—though I have never been in Russia—that in our time Russian culture itself is going through a period of transformation—this is very often the case—in which process the Russians are becoming more positively, and on a different level, the same thing that they were before. After all, we may say that the possibilities which a country has to give in cultural influence are in a way given almost from the beginning as characteristics of that people. They can develop, of course, with progress, but I think one can say that what a country will give in the future will be what it gave in the past. Essentially what Russia has to give to the West is a peculiar—peculiar, that is, to Russia—spiritual point of view, which is something one is very much aware of in the great Russian novelists. On the other hand, Russia might be dangerous in simply giving back to western Europe on a much larger scale of its own mistakes . . . I mean in the way of a kind of exaggerated mechanisation, which is also, in a different political frame, visible in the U.S.A. Both America and Russia, to me, think in terms of engineering. The contrary is more in terms of planting and growth. You can design a machine—Eliot again looked up quickly, almost suspiciously—you know, you can make it so that the machine will be exactly what it is meant to be from drawings and specifications, but a tree you have just to plant and wait for.

I was not entirely absorbed by his thoughts, I asked: *You mentioned the smaller nations, what is their role, or, better, their fate in a new Europe, the unity that we wish for?*

'The political forms of unity between the nations of Europe is a question really of what we find going on in experience. There is necessarily and obviously a form of unity (outside) . . . you can't just plan that . . . unity is something which has to grow, develop . . . it is a living thing, not a building. But it should be something in which each cultural unit—rather than nation, because a nation includes perhaps more than one cultural

unit—each cultural unit has to make, directly or indirectly, its contribution to the rest.’

I felt that these words were more the expression of a wish than actual fact. I was also disturbed by a genuine scepticism concerning the goodwill of mankind and also as to what would happen to its creative ability in the strait-jacket of modern civilization. And how could decisive solutions be reached without these? I asked: *Do you, on the whole, believe in the creative future of the white race?* The changes in our life brought about by science and technology have brought a change in the thinking power of mankind—we are growing farther and farther away from the mystic source of Life and are losing the artistic and creative craft, so that we are falling into a system of thought which only leaves works which can be valued according to measure, statistics and weight. What is your opinion on this question?

‘I think it is possible that that process of which you speak and of which many thoughtful people have been aware may certainly go still further than we know at present in the same direction, but I think that any tendency like that gives rise to its own opposite and that in the end, sooner or later, and in one way or another there will be general rebellion against that, because, you see, that sort of thing leads to something which the technological type of mind leaves out of account. And that is, that human beings will just become bored with the kind of life they have from it—and I think that boredom is a very powerful force in life and that people will do the most extraordinary things to escape from it. They may not act rationally, of course, in getting out of it, and that will raise psychological difficulties which will express themselves in due course.’

Eliot surveyed me with his inscrutable smile, in which resignation, sorrow and confidence are mingled. I understood that this man is being dragged through the hell of doubt and that he follows a conviction that perhaps neither today nor tomorrow will see realized. May his time come. I asked: *Do you think that there will be no more war—after this one?*

‘There again, I think that wars will very likely change their form from time to time. I mean that the alternatives are not simply universal peace on the one side and on the other the sort of thing we have been going through these five years. One might get different types of wars for different motives, for different

purposes. We might have in view small wars, instead of big ones, local instead of universal. Unless human beings become mere machines or, on the other hand, unless they find some other new emotion to satisfy them, they are likely to be driven to wars of one kind or another, simply by the pressure I was speaking of: the need to escape from boredom. Of course, I don't think it is so simple—that people become dull and that makes them start wars—wars will always, as before, appear to people to be enforced upon them. Of course, the trouble with the modern type of war is that from a psychological point of view it becomes just as much a cause of boredom as any kind of peace could be. Indeed it is really more so.'

You do not see this question as a moral one?

'It is simply our duty to avoid wars as much as possible, but I was not looking at this as a moral question.'

Do you not see this problem as an expression of the two-fold, Janus-faced nature of mankind, of the destructive crafts, the dark impulses which are always breaking through despite all controls? This in the sense of the 'acte gratuit' of André Gide?

'No, I don't think that it is something to be regarded as an essential part of human nature.'

Do you believe in a development of mankind in the moral sense?

'I think it can both improve and deteriorate, I don't believe that either is inevitable. But as to any sort of complete change or transformation of human nature, I think we cannot take this into account, because that is something beyond what we can imagine.'

The questions became more and more involved. *How do you regard the problem of Good and Evil?* I asked. And the part they play in the history of mankind? To express myself more clearly, I might say: Nature is neither good nor evil in the human sense. God is not only good—humanly speaking. The task of man is to humanize Nature and also his own nature.

Eliot thought for a while. Then he said, feeling his way: 'Well, that leads us far into the realms of Theology. I don't know that I would say that nature is neither good or evil. I would say that nature, as the creation of God, is in its own way good, but that there is a further notion of good and evil which is due to the existence of human beings. I should say that it was the

function of the human race on its own level to complete the goodness of nature with a goodness of its own which is the conscious awareness and direction of the will towards the good as we can see it. But here again, in human affairs there is a certain relativity of good and evil, because we cannot foresee all the consequences of our own acts. So in a way we are also a part of nature, besides being human beings. In other words, we only partly know what we are doing at any time.'

How would you, out of the bitter experience of the present time, wish mankind to develop?

'Well, we can only talk about the immediate future in these matters, not the whole future. I should speak of a greater spiritual consciousness, which is not asking that everybody should rise to the same conscious level, but that everybody should have some awareness of the depths of spiritual development and some appreciation and respect for those more exceptional people who can proceed further in spiritual knowledge than most of us can. You see, we cannot all be artists, we cannot all of us even truly appreciate good art intelligently, but we can all have respect for art and the artist. We cannot all be holy men, but we can have in general, reverence for holiness, so far as we can see it.'

I felt in these words a criticism and asked: *Do you believe that the spiritual and moral condition of mankind would be improved by a more intimate contact with Nature? Or do we need a spiritual order of which mankind is conscious? Or both?*

'Both. I do think that there is too much separation between town and country and that in all sorts of ways. Indeed, one of the problems of present society is surely the status and scale of living of the primary producer. The fact is that in the industrial countries of the West at least, the livelihood of the landworker is more poorly paid than that of the industrial worker. The problem of town and country itself is a very big one for modern times. The big town has a tendency to become bigger; therefore we have to find a way to interfere beneficially with that process.'

I asked nothing more. Here the circle closed, here, as everywhere, there was for Eliot the one law, the law of all Nature, the simple, yet unconscious law of mankind of the present day: that everything has its own time to come into being, to reach its climax and to dissolve. It is the opposite of all artificial speed, of all purely rational, constructive, processes, which rather drag

us to destruction than bring us to real fulfilment. To feel through and live through a question is different from grasping it purely theoretically and rationally. If men are to be healthy, they must once more follow the rhythm which is an integral part of the blood circulation, not only the beat of a motor; the nature of the seasons, not only the fruits of the hothouse; the will to inner balance and inner truth, not only the muddled emotion of a body which is falling, this time into blackest nothingness; spiritual certainty, not only words which confuse the head but do not lift the heart.

HENRY ADLER

THORNTON WILDER'S THEATRE

CRITICIZING 'Girl with the Gardenias', Mr. Eric Newton wrote recently that Epstein had apparently attempted to make the figure both individual and symbolical, a fusion that Mr. Newton considered impossible to achieve. I cannot argue with Mr. Newton about sculpture. But the drama, at any rate, has found this fusion possible and immensely beneficial. Ibsen, for example, raised universal issues from the particular dramatic issue of the building of a tower, and made Peer Gynt someone bigger than a wandering wastrel. In this century, however, there has been a gap between the individualists and the symbolists. Shaw, although influenced by Ibsen, set dramatic conflict in more intellectual terms, while Chehov, equally aware of social problems, concerned himself with the moods and emotions of the individual. The Dodie Smith-Ackland school has dealt in near-Chehov treatments of human relationships. The poets and intellectuals, bored by the expensively furnished play peopled with tea-party twitterers, sought to cope with bigger issues, and in such plays as *The Ascent of F6* and *Murder in the Cathedral* the drama has become simplified and abstract. The reaction was healthy but excessive. It emptied the baby out with the bath. Getting rid of puerility, the intellectuals also lost people.

Mr. Auden's Mr. and Mrs. A. are cardboard stooges with as little individuality as Strube's 'Little Man'. Except for Sean o'Casey's *Red Star at Night*, the public has not seen in recent years any play that deals with poetry and profundity with the lives of individuals.

We might have seen such a play if the war had not prevented Mr. Michel St. Denis' intended production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. Only members of the Forces were able to see the recent production by the Theatre Group of the United States Army and American Red Cross, directed by Lieutenant Gene Jerowski. But Wilder's later play *The Skin of our Teeth* is now to be seen by the general public. His approach to the theatre prompted one or two members of the audience in Liverpool, where I saw the play on its tour, to call the author raving mad and to sigh for Miss McCracken and Mr. Rattigan. Others may hail Wilder as a liberator of the drama from the shackles of scenery and chronological sequence achieving a new freedom in time and space and a new poetry.

The stage directions to Act One of *Our Town* are as follows: 'No curtain. No scenery. The audience, arriving, sees an empty stage in the half light.' From that dim and empty stage, Wilder proceeds to conjure up the life of a town. 'The Stage Manager, hat on and pipe in mouth, begins placing a table and several chairs down stage left, and a table and chairs down stage right.' He leans against the proscenium pillar and addresses the audience: 'This play is called *Our Town*. It was written by Thornton Wilder . . . The name of the town is Grovers Corners, New Hampshire—just across the Massachusetts line; longitude 42 degrees 40 minutes; latitude 70 degrees 37 minutes. The First Act shows a day in our town. The day is May 7, 1901. The time is just before dawn.' He goes on to describe the geography of the town. Then, indicating the chairs and table on each side of the stage, he tells us that one set is the home of Dr. Gibbs and family and the other that of Mr. Webb, the local editor, and his family. Two arched trellises are pushed on stage to represent gardens. ('There's some scenery for those who think they have to have scenery', says the Stage Manager.) The day starts in Grovers Corners. Mrs. Gibbs and Mrs. Webb scold the 'children' out of bed, they mime the eating of breakfast, and throw invisible scraps to imaginary chickens. The children go to school, grow up. Act Two deals with George Gibbs' wooing and wedding of

Emily Webb. Standing on the top of the step-ladders which simulate their first-floor rooms, George Gibbs and Emily Webb are blinded to their homework by the big summer moon. They fall in love, marry. In Act Three, Emily dies in childbirth. As the Stage Manager says: 'The First Act was called Daily Life. This (second) Act is called Love and Marriage. There's another Act coming after this: I reckon you can guess what that's about.'

Throughout, the Stage Manager comments and explains. When props are required, he gets them and when small parts are to be played, he plays them. He talks to us informally about the people in the play as though we were neighbours dropped in to watch a charade. Sometimes, he buttonholes one of the local inhabitants who comes forward and awkwardly, like someone interviewed by the B.B.C., gives us facts and figures about the town, its geology, its temperature, its history, its birth and death rates. He is a bore. But the information is important. Wilder wants us to realize that to the making of Grovers Corners went age-long formations of rock, developments of life, migrations of race, and breeding of families. The aridity of the information is intentional; when we have dismissed Grovers Corners as just another town we shall be the more moved and startled by the inner human mystery. George Gibbs' young sister Rebecca comes up to his room and says:

'I never told you about that letter Jane Crofut got from her minister when she was sick . . . He wrote Jane a letter and on the envelope the address was like this: It said: Jane Crofut: The Crofut Farm, Grovers Corners, Sutton County, New Hampshire, United States of America.'

GEORGE: 'What's funny about that?'

REBECCA: 'But listen, its not finished'. (And she recites with awed deliberation): 'The United States of America; Continent of North America; Western hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; the Universe; the Mind of God—that's what it said on the envelope.'

GEORGE: 'What do you know?'

REBECCA: 'And the postman brought it just the same.'
And George repeats 'What do you know?' They are silent and look before them with startled eyes. Suddenly they see themselves pin-pointed in space and time. Grovers Corners is the hub of the universe, and they are the climax of history.

But why mime, and all this elaborate simplification, and the scene played at the top of step-ladders and the intervention of this strange figure, the Stage Manager? In emptying the stage, Wilder is not seeking after abstraction—quite the reverse. *Grovers Corners* is everytown, it is true—but only by being first so peculiarly itself. The abstract writer irons out the personal kink, the individual trait. He deals in Man. Wilder deals with Dr. Gibbs and Mr. Webb and the scandal-monger and the drunkard. He aims at the cosmic through the local. When George and Emily are to be married, the Stage Manager turns up his coat collar, walks to the back of the stage, turns and waits. The congregation come in and go up to face him. That group, the preacher and the crowd of backs in serge and alpaca, is strangely dramatic. It is Society assisting at one of its official occasions. And downstage, the girl clings to her father, the boy to his mother, both suddenly appalled at this frightening and irrevocable step from the familiar centre. The ceremony is performed. The stage directions say: “The ring. The kiss. The stage is suddenly arrested in silent tableau.” In that tableau the familiar routine acquires the dignity of a historic ritual. The Stage Manager says: ‘The real hero of this scene isn’t on the stage at all . . . Every child born into the world is Nature’s attempt to make a perfect human being . . . And don’t forget the other witnesses at this wedding—the ancestors. Millions of them . . .’ (It is this idea that Wilder fully develops in *The Skin of Our Teeth*.)

There is a puzzling dualism in this presentation of the world as a stage. We are never quite certain when we are looking at the world and when at a stage, when the Stage Manager is chorus and commentator outside the play and when another of the people living inside it. Sometimes, he leans against the proscenium frame and discusses in his friendly way the scene being performed for our benefit. But when he goes on stage and asks Emily and George to re-enact the scene of their wooing, we are not sure whether he is speaking to them as actors or as living people really in love, whether he is a Stage Manager rehearsing a play or a creative god summoning up the events of the past and the future. The setting of a plank across two chairs is no proof that the scene is intended solely as a stage representation. It is a proof only that the conviction of reality derives from the thoughts and emotions, and that props are useful merely for such purposes

as indicating the geography of the scene. Indeed, this apparently artless use of chairs and planks and step ladders is the mask of a superb confidence trick. 'Nothing up my sleeve', says the Stage Manager in effect. 'No illusion attempted.' All he is going to do is talk about the town and have parts of its life enacted. We detachedly watch the charade. But by renouncing any attempt at scenic simulation, he is robbing us of any opportunity to detect discrepancies between the representation and the reality. He is compelling our imaginations to supply the scenery. And the fact that we imagine the scene is proof that we believe in the action, which is what he is after. He ceases to be the outside commentator or to recognise our existence as audience. He walks on the stage and into the play. Our imaginations follow him and find, not actors and a stage manager rehearsing a play, but men and women living their lives in Grovers Corners. Even then, the Stage Manager's identity baffles us. He is an inhabitant of Grovers Corners but he is also anyone in the crowd, no-one in particular. Sometimes, he speaks in character as the man at the soda fountain or as the preacher. But more often, he leans against the wall, anonymous and changeless through the generations, and surveys life with the author's own knowledge and understanding, turning from the present to the future and past as though they were pages in an album. 'Along here's a row of stores', he says as he describes the town. 'Hitching posts and horse blocks in front of them. First automobile's going to come along in about five years—belonged to Banker Cartwright, our richest citizen...' He is like one of those matey gods in Euripides who is in the know about human destinies but wears mufti and is buffeted around in the crowd.

Wilder spent some of his childhood in China and perhaps was excited then by the conspiracy of imagination into which the audiences of the Chinese (e.g. *Lady Precious Stream*) and the Japanese No drama are lured. And in his foreword to *The Angel that Troubled the Waters* (1928), he refers to his 'passion for compression'. It is this which may have attracted him to the No technique which he exploits in his plays: the improvisation of scenes in full view of the audience, the circumambulation of the stage to signify a journey, and the interlocutions of the Stage Manager (Wilder's adaption of the *waki*, who figures so prominently in the No). Wilder rebels against the weighing down and

slowing up of the imaginative writer by a mass of scenic lumber. In 'The Happy Journey to Trenton and Camden' the Stage Manager moves forward 'four chairs and a low platform. This is the automobile . . . Pa's hands hold an imaginary steering wheel and continually shift gears.' Even when reading the play you get a vivid feeling of the Arcadian day for the Kirby family as it goes off on its jaunt past the big advertisement hoardings. The difficulties of scene shifting need no longer confine the playwright to a group of people who must be engineered in and out of a room for half an hour's dialogue. The transitions of scene can be as swift and subtle as the workings of the mind because we, the audience, supply the scenery. The theatre can have all the pace of the film and still retain its always superior intellectual and emotional capacity. It can leap in space and time, from present to past and future and back again, from the mortal world to the spiritual world, as it does in the Third Act of *Our Town*. After the Second Act, the Stage Manager says: 'Ten minutes intermission, folks'. But there is no fall of curtain. The scene is shifted openly and for the last Act we see three rows of people sitting primly upright. We accept that they are dead and Wilder is free to treat of the feelings of the dead and their relationship to the living. We recognise Mrs. Gibbs and other inhabitants of the town. They sit and talk in low voices, anticipating the arrival of Emily, who has died in childbirth. Soon she arrives in her white wedding dress surrounded by the cortege of mourners which files in, helmeted by umbrellas, like some drab centipede. (Tyrone Guthrie set the scene for the burial of Ophelia in his modern dress 'Hamlet' very similarly). As the mourners murmur over the grave, Emily wanders over to the other dead. She is too new to feel one of them. She wants to relive the past. The dead warn her not to try and when she does, seeking to recapture the life of her twelfth birthday, she finds that although the happenings of the day are the same, she cannot relive the day as she was then but looks on at it with the detachment and fore-knowledge of an adult. There is a poignant feeling of the transitory and irrecapturable moment. *Our Town* begins with dawn and youth, traces life through its meridian and ends with Grovers Corners settling down for the night and the dead sighing in the windy cemetery. The young marry without understanding, time passes in a flash, the dead forget and are forgotten. But there is nothing here of Eliot's

priggishly contemptuous 'birth and copulation and death'. Wilder's attitude is one of pity and an affection. He recognises the unique importance to the individual of each stage of the journey. 'Yes, its clearing up' says the Stage Manager. 'There are the stars—doing their old criss-cross journeys in the sky . . . Only this one is straining away, straining away all the time to make something of itself. The strain's so bad that every sixteen hours everybody lies down and gets a rest. (He winds his watch). H'm . . . Eleven o'clock in Grovers Corners. You get a good rest too. Goodnight.'

In *Our Town*, the cycle of youth, marriage and death is depicted through the lives of one family living in the present time. *The Skin of Our Teeth* also deals with the lives of one family but now it is the human family and the time is any time from the creation to the ice age, encountering three great crises of human history on the way. A music-hall atmosphere is created before the play begins. Gaudy lantern slides, reminiscent of an early nickelodeon, are projected on the screen. The first slide gets the key of the play. We are shown an amiable sun grinning over a hill and the commentator announces: 'The sun rose this morning at 6.32 a.m. This gratifying event was first reported by Mrs. Dorothy Stetson . . .' The Antrobus family (the etymology suggests that 'all man' is indicated) are facing an Ice Age and the consequent end of the world. Events, like the rising of the sun, that we have come to accept as invariable routine have become unreliable and eagerly to be celebrated when they occur.

Each of the three acts deals with a major crisis that has threatened human life. Act One; the Ice Age, the high hand of nature against which man's ingenuity is impotent. Act Two; the deluge, the moral anarchy which follows on prosperity and the philosophy of 'enjoy yourself'. Act Three; war. George Antrobus is the old Adam, the business man, the inventor of the wheel and the lever and the multiplication table, the sound citizen and *l'homme moyen sensuel* who, although bound more closely than he realises to his fat wife and his children, is attracted all through history by Sabina (the Sabine woman), the pleasure girl. In depicting the characteristics of the Antrobuses, Wilder has taken the highest common denominator of the human family. They are typically modern and American yet they exhibit the primitive instincts of pre-history so that they barricade the door at the approach of a stranger (which action indeed has its modern counterpart). George's

interests are in the outside world. Even when the family is starving and cold in the Ice Age, he cannot resist the appeal of Homer and the Muses and the rest of the refugee eccentrics who come tapping on the window to ask for food and warmth. But Mrs. Antrobus regards her husband's inventions as ingenious but irrelevant. She sees the main purpose of life as the rearing of her children, and, if possible, concealing from George any indication that the murderous Henry (*né* Cain) and the coquettish Gladys are anything but prodigies. When George discovers the truth, as he does in the Ice Age, he stamps out the life-giving fire and welcomes the destruction of the human race. Then his wife has to cajole him and fool him into the belief that his children are, in spite of everything, little wonders, that life is really worth while.

This compression of human history is experimented with in a small way in an earlier play. *The Long Christmas Dinner* is a one-acter covering three generations and the Christmas dinner laid on the table is all the Christmas dinners eaten in that time. Birth is indicated by a 'strange portal trimmed with garlands of fruit and flowers'. Death by another portal opposite edged and hung with black velvet. 'Most of the actors carry wigs of white hair which they adjust upon their heads at the indicated moment simply and without comment.' As they become ill or old, they leave the table and approach the black portal. When they die, they depart through it and are immediately spoken of in the past tense. The reactions to life of the generations viewed in this imaginatively compressed form are ironic and tragic.

The tone of the first act of *The Skin of Our Teeth* is burlesque, and Miss Vivien Leigh as Sabina utters her first lines: 'Oh, oh, oh! Six-o'clock and the master not home yet. Pray God nothing serious has happened to him crossing the Hudson river' in the accents of ham melodrama. But, facetiously, Wilder is reminding us that, before bridges and trains, the crossing of the river was once just such a hazard. Throughout the play he is pointing to the insecurity of human life on the planet, reminding us of our luck that we decided to develop along the human branch of the mammal species, and not along an evolutionary cul-de-sac like the dinosaur and the mammoth (who are shown as domestic pets of the Antrobuses), of the fact that human life has survived by the skin of its teeth. His use of burlesque has a motive as we see when the actress who plays Sabina steps outside her part to

confide to the audience that she couldn't possibly make the speech which has been set down for her because it would hurt the feelings of a friend in the audience. It is Wilder's passion for compression in action again. He dislikes playing scenes which the audience can foretell. (In his play *Brother Fire*, he concludes a speech by St. Francis with the stage direction 'and so on'.) Wilder says grave things lightly and their effect is by contrast starker, like a skeleton at a children's party. He says, in effect: 'Seriously, joking apart . . .' In the blare and colour of the Atlantic City (modern Babylon) scene, the Fortune Teller comes out of her booth and becomes a fateful figure, making bitter prophecies about human destiny in the vein of Isaiah. Several times in this play, not only the Stage Manager (who is a less important figure than he was in *Our Town*) but also the actors, step outside their parts and talk to us as ordinary people making their living in the theatre. This device does not destroy illusion; it heightens it. The actress who plays Sabina takes the wind out of the audience's sails by confessing that she does not understand the play herself: ' . . . all the troubles the human race has gone through, there's a subject for you. Besides, the author hasn't made up his silly mind as to whether we're living in caves or in New Jersey today . . .' She puts herself on our side and we share her puzzlement and curiosity to find out what it is all about. A stronger example is the scene wherein Henry (Cain) Antrobus struggles murderously with his father. Suddenly, Sabina stops the scene; the actor who is playing Henry is becoming too violent. 'Stop, stop,' she cries. 'Don't play this scene. You know what happened last night. Stop the play'. The actor apologises for his violence, not as Henry to his father, but as actor to fellow-actor. It is in this way, by emphasising that he is speaking to us personally, as actors and audience outside the play, that Wilder brings his argument close to life and makes his point of the universality of blood guilt.

In his plays, as in *The Bridge of San Louis Rey*, Wilder is fascinated by the complexity of circumstance, of evolution and history, which has made people just what they are, and do whatever they are doing at any particular moment. In *Our Town*, the Stage Manager presents Professor Willard's dry recital of the geographical, biological, historical detail and the rest which has gone to the making of Groves Corners as it is in the year 1901. And in an earlier play *Pullman Car Hiawatha*, the Stage Manager

introduces us to the superficial selves of the passengers, then to their secret selves, and then says: 'So much for the inside of the car . . . Now for its position geographically, meteorologically, astronomically, theologically considered. Pullman Car Hiawatha, ten minutes of ten, December twenty-first, Nineteen thirty. All ready.'

(Some figures begin to appear on the balcony).

'No, no! It's not time for the Planets yet. Nor the Hours.'

And later, the Stage Manager conducts, like the conductor of an orchestra, the sound of the Earth and the Planets in their wheel through space.

The Planets and the Hours appear again in *The Skin of our Teeth*. At least, they should appear. But the Stage Manager steps into the play to tell us that the actors who should have played the Hours and Planets have been taken ill with food poisoning. In their place, we are asked to accept the dressers and the commissionaire who, in their working dress, utter the thoughts of the philosophers George Antrobus' reads as the hours pass and the earth spins. Here, again, Wilder deliberately discards the pompous effect he might have achieved with dignified figures. But there is something moving in the utterance of the thoughts of Aristotle and Spinoza by the nervous little Cockney dresser and the wooden-faced Irish commissionaire, the voices of ordinary people.

There is one more point to be noted. There is a greater use of scenery in *The Skin of our Teeth* than there is in *Our Town*. But there is no attempt to convince us of its 'reality'. Indeed, it is used to point the dialogue as amusingly as in a Disney film. 'In the midst of life we are in death,' says Sabina, and a fragment of scenery flies up into the lofts as an indication of the uncertainty of existence. To symbolize the rebuilding of the home shattered by war, Sabina pulls on a rope and the leaning walls move into their right place.

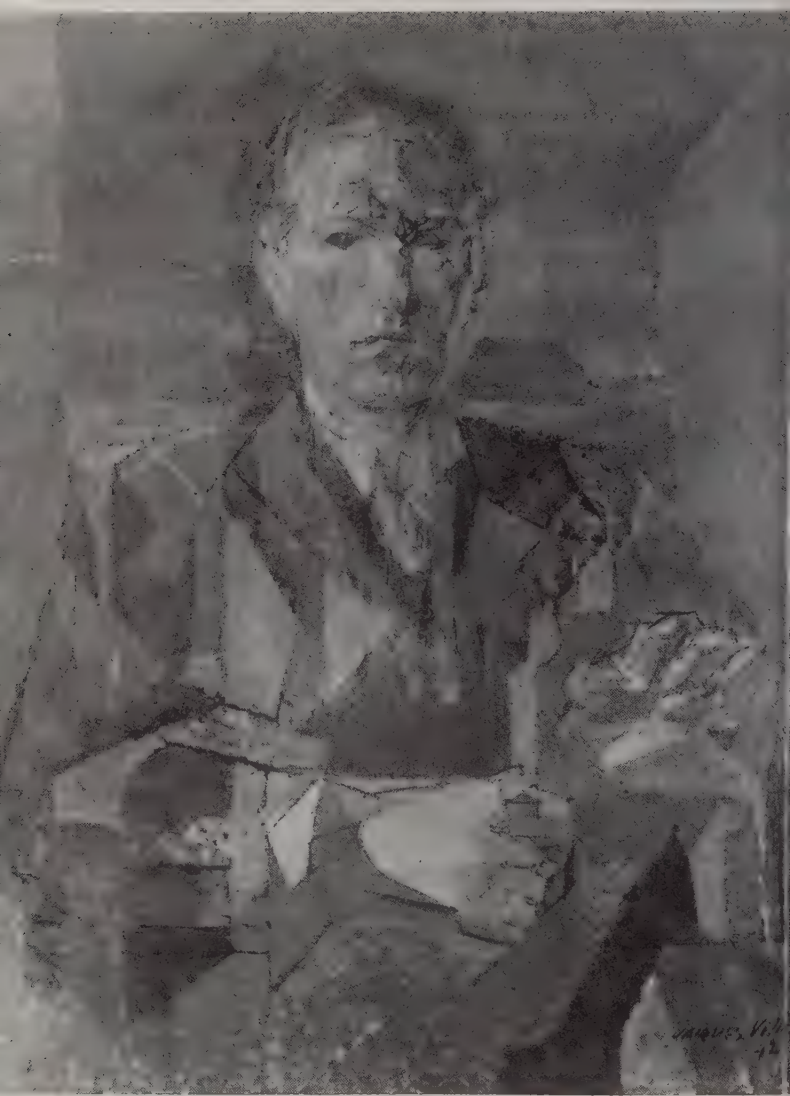
The Antrobuses have come through by the skin of their teeth. But, immediately, Sabina re-embarks on her opening speech in Act One: 'The whole world's at sixes and sevens, and why the house hasn't fallen about our ears long ago is a miracle to me.' (She comes down to the footlights.) 'This is where you came in. We have to go on for ages and ages yet. The end of the play isn't written yet. Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus! Their heads are full of



JACQUES VILLON. The Small Town. 1943

The Bridge
at Braugency





Portrait, 1942

plans and they're as confident as the day began—and they told me to tell you: Goodnight.'

On this very topical note, the play ends.

Wilder's simplification is not new, nor does it owe it exclusively to the No. Shakespeare uses it in *Henry V*:

'Thus, with imagined wing, our swift scene flies,
In action of no less celerity
Than that of thought. . . .

Work, work your imaginations and therein see a siege. . . .'

Shakespeare apologizes for the poor resources of his 'wooden O'. He did not realize that the economy to which it compelled him was his greatest asset, since his poetry was more graphic than any blackcloth could have been. Wilder's technique is not for everyone. But he has written some beautiful and moving plays. And by demanding imagination in the theatre, he has shown how the drama may be freed from strict chronological sequence and the static scene to achieve a new agility and scope, and a poetry that celebrates the miracle of life.

RAYMOND MORTIMER JACQUES VILLON

IN Paris last November I did not have time to look with any thoroughness at the work of the latest generation of painters. But I managed to see a lot of pictures by artists unknown to me, many of them excellently painted—the French know how to paint just as they know how to cook or design clothes, and the general level of accomplishment remains conspicuously higher than it is here. But most of these pictures derived unmistakably from Bonnard, Matisse or Braque, or indeed from all three. Then in Paul Eluard's flat, among a number of Picassos, I was bowled over by a landscape as original in style as it was beautiful. Whom could it be by? Jacques Villon, Eluard told me, and I could see other works by him at the *Galérie Carré*. I went there and found pictures that could stand up well to the splendid recent Braques in the same gallery. It was a disappointment to discover that the artist was not a newcomer of genius, but a man of about sixty-eight, one of the original cubists. I then discovered

that I had owned for twenty years works signed by him, the coloured engravings after Picasso, Matisse and Renoir, edited by Bernheim Jeune. I had always admired the consummate skill with which he had translated the originals into his medium instead of seeking to reproduce effects particular to oil-paint.

During the war Villon, who is a brother of Marcel Duchamp, has come to be accepted as one of the leading French masters. His pictures command alarming prices; a large book is being written on him; his influence is powerful, it seems, upon a whole group of young painters. Photographs give little notion of his works, for these are notable in the first place for the brilliance of their colour. I think Villon is as personal in his invention of colour-harmonies as Matisse or Rouault—the whole canvas scintillates. He retains his old Cubist ways so far as to build his pictures as it were out of facets (but they are less emphatically cubist than they look in black-and-white reproductions). He admits to being impressed by remarks in Leonardo's *Treatise on Painting*: e.g. 'The air is full of pyramids with gleaming sides.' (I have noticed that painters sometimes like to find in such theoretical dicta pretexts for their own spontaneous practices.) He has a great liking for dividing his canvas by two diagonals that cross one another, thus making four triangles separated by a St. Andrew's cross. Often too, he constructs a picture on three or four horizontal stripes of colour. One of the works I most admired was a view of a Southern town almost in monochrome, in which the solidity of the drawing and the exact rightness of the placing reminded me of Cézanne. But it is as a colourist that Villon is most impressive; and words, like photographs, are useless for conveying his particular rutilance of yellows and purples, of blues and greens. He has painted a good deal in the South of France and on the Loire; he likes pastoral scenes, such as harvesting under the meridional sun. I was struck also by the vivacity and expressiveness of his portraits.

The purpose of this note is not to put into words what only the eye can apprehend, but to suggest that here is an artist who has, belatedly, attained the zenith of his profession, a newly revealed major star in the great constellation that dominates the firmament of twentieth-century painting. I trust that soon we shall be able to see in England a representative exhibition of his works.

A. J. AYER

NOVELIST-PHILOSOPHERS

V—JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

Conclusion

3. SARTRE'S VIEWS ON THE EXISTENCE OF OTHERS

(a) Outline of the Problem

IT is not easy to bring oneself to doubt that other persons exist. A philosopher like Fichte may come to the conclusion that 'the world is my idea', but even if such a view can be made internally self-consistent, it is excessively repugnant to common sense; indeed to refer to common sense at all would seem already to imply its rejection. Nevertheless the belief that there are other persons and that they have experiences which are similar to one's own has not been found easy to justify, and I do not know that any philosopher has yet given a satisfactory account of it. In the first instance the difficulty seems to arise from the fact that each person's experiences are assumed to be private to himself. The basis of this assumption is itself not very clear, but I take it to be logical rather than empirical in character. That is to say, it is not, in my view, merely an empirical matter of fact that one person cannot literally think another's thoughts or feel another's emotions, but a logical consequence of the rules which govern our use of language; so that if, for example, 'I am unable to feel your toothache', it is not through lack of sympathy, or for want of a sufficiently ingenious experimental technique, but because an expression like 'feeling another's toothache' does not have a meaning; and this is a consequence of the fact that our criteria of personal identity are such as to make it impossible *a priori* for different personal histories to share a common term. But if the experiences of another person are thus, by definition, made inaccessible to my observation, it is difficult to see what reason I can have for believing in their existence. I have the evidence of my senses to support my belief in the existence of other human

bodies; but what justification can I have for assuming that 'behind' the phenomena which constitute another human body are thoughts and feelings and perceptions which are analogous to my own?

The most common answer is that my belief in the existence of these inaccessible experiences can be justified by an argument from analogy. The suggestion is that I have learned that my own inner experiences are correlated with certain states and movements of my body, including my use of language, and that my observing similar manifestations in connection with other bodies entitles me to infer that they are associated with similar experiences. When put in this way the argument seems plausible, but it becomes less so when it is stated more exactly. For it must be remembered that the similarity which I discover between the conditions of my own body and those of other bodies is a similarity between different sets of my own sense-data. The premise is, therefore, that I have learned that certain visual, tactual and auditory sense-data are associated with certain introspectible thoughts and feelings, and that I apprehend other sense-data which are similar in quality to the members of the former class, but differ from them in being differently located in their respective sense-fields. With what then, am I to infer that the members of this second class are associated? The answer which completes the analogy is 'with similar thoughts and feelings'; but the trouble is that unless I already have reason to believe that there are such things as other persons' experiences I must presumably take these similar thoughts and feelings to be, not the thoughts and feelings of others, but unconscious experiences of my own; and this conclusion, besides being generally false, is not what the argument was intended to establish. Furthermore, there is something uncomfortably mysterious about this conception of another's private world which I posit as lying behind the appearances that afford me the evidence of his physical existence. It is disturbingly reminiscent of the animistic belief in imperceptible spirits. To this it may indeed be objected that the other person's experiences are believed to be immediately accessible to his observation, if not to mine. But could it not equally have been supposed that the imperceptible spirits were conscious of themselves?

In face of this difficulty some philosophers have taken the course of defining the experiences of other people in terms of

their sensible manifestations. That is, they hold that all that can be meant by saying of another person that he is having a certain experience is that he displays what would normally be described as the external signs of the experience in question, or at least that he would display them if certain other conditions were fulfilled. Thus, to say of some other person that he was, for example, in pain would, in this view, mean no more than that his body was in one or other of the observable conditions which are ordinarily taken to be indicative of pain, where these bodily conditions may be understood to include the verbal responses that certain questions would evoke. I think that this theory may be developed in such a way as to meet some of the more obvious objections that can be brought against it, as, for example, the possibility that the person is acting a part or lying; but apart from the fact that it is somewhat shocking to common sense, it has the defect of drawing what seems an excessively sharp distinction between the statements that one makes about other people and the apparently similar statements that one makes about oneself. For when I say of myself that I am in pain I do not intend merely to describe the perceptible condition of my body; I am referring primarily to a feeling of which I am directly aware. This asymmetry can indeed be removed by the adoption of a thoroughgoing behaviourism, according to which my own thoughts and sensations are themselves to be identified with their outward 'signs'; but, whatever the convenience of this theory, it does not seem to cover the facts of my experience. Moreover, I do not see how even the behaviourist's propositions are to be supposed capable of being verified unless the subjective element is, explicitly or tacitly, re-introduced.

(b) *Sartre's Concessions to Behaviourism*

Sartre's general position is very different from that of the behaviourists; but with regard to this problem of other persons' experiences he appears to adopt their standpoint. Thus he introduces his remarks about the human body with the statement that 'it is in its entirety that *l'être-pour-soi* must be corporeal and in its entirety that it must be consciousness'. 'There can be no question', he continues, 'of its being *united* to a body. Similarly, *l'être-pour-autrui* is wholly corporeal; there are in this case no "psychical

phenomena" to unite to the body; there is nothing *behind* the body. But the body is wholly "psychical". And later on, after declaring that 'my perception of another's body is radically different from my perceptions of things', inasmuch as I perceive it always as a whole and in reference to a situation which indicates it, he asserts that being an object for another person is strictly equivalent to being a body. '*Seul existe pour moi le corps d'autrui avec ses différentes significations;*' and these signs do not refer to anything beyond the body, to '*un psychisme mystérieux*'; '*elles se réfèrent au monde et à elles-mêmes*'. In particular, Sartre continues, '*ces manifestations émotionnelles ou, d'une façon plus générale, les phénomènes improprement appelés d'expression ne nous indiquent nullement une affection cachée et vécue par quelque psychisme, qui serait l'objet immatériel des recherches du psychologue; ces froncements de sourcils, cette rougeur, ce bégaiement, ce léger tremblement des mains, ces regards en dessous qui semblent à la fois timides et menaçants n'expriment pas la colère, ils sont la colère.*' We shall see later on that this is not the only or even the principal way in which Sartre conceives of others, but this statement plainly gives reason to the behaviourists, so far as it goes. It is true that he proceeds to criticize them on the ground that they have 'lost sight of man's principal characteristic' which is his '*transcendance-transcendée*', and that they have failed to recognize that the Other Person (*Autrui*) is '*l'objet qui ne se comprend qu'à partir de sa vie*'; but the validity of these highly dubious propositions is not, I think, relevant to the particular problem with which we have so far been dealing.

I have mentioned as a possible objection to a behaviouristic analysis of the statements that one makes about another person's experiences the extent to which they are thereby made to differ from the statements that one makes about one's own; but it may be that Sartre would consider that this objection did not touch him, since he dismisses the whole notion of subjective sensations as 'a mere psychologist's dream'. He does, however, draw a sharp distinction between 'my own body', which he variously describes as a centre of reference which I live but do not cognize, as an instrument of which I cannot use any instrument to serve myself, and as the situation of the *pour-soi* in the world, and the other's body, which appears to me '*comme un point de vue sur lequel je peux prendre un point de vue, un instrument que je peux*

utiliser avec d'autres instruments'. At the same time he seems to allow that I can in some measure adopt another's point of view towards my own body, and he does in fact say that it is by means of the concepts of '*Autrui*' that I know my body. '*Le mal que je souffre, je peux le viser dans son En-soi, c'est-à-dire précisément, dans son être-pour-autrui. A ce moment je le connais, c'est-à-dire que je le vise dans sa dimension d'être qui m'échappe, dans la face qu'il tourne vers les Autres.*' In addition, between the primitive stage at which I merely live my body, and the stage at which I know it, Sartre finds another level of existence for it at which it becomes what he calls '*le corps psychique*'. This *corps psychique*, which is described as '*pur corrélatif noématique d'une conscience réflexive*' is said not to be known, inasmuch as the reflexion to which it corresponds is not yet cognitive; '*elle est affectivité en son surgissement originel*'. None the less, '*ce corps psychique, étant la projection, sur le plan de l'en-soi, de l'intra-contexture de la conscience, fait la matière implicite de tous les phénomènes de la psyché.*' Thus as far as the field of empirical psychology is concerned, Sartre appears to reach a position which is not markedly different from that of the thoroughgoing behaviourists. The trouble is, however, that he does not content himself with the field of empirical psychology, either in respect of others, or, as we have seen, in respect of oneself.

(c) '*Autrui-sujet*'

So far we have been dealing only with the existence of others as objects of one's own knowledge; but it is Sartre's contention that they are also revealed as 'subjects'. As such, they are not, properly speaking, known; but their existence is required as 'the concrete and transcendent condition of my own objectivity'. The theory seems to be that in certain states, such as those of shame and pride, I am aware of being an object and that this carries with it an awareness of the existence of Another as a subject who observes me. Thus, '*ma liaison fondamentale avec autrui-sujet doit pouvoir se ramener à ma possibilité permanente d'être vu par autrui. C'est dans et par la révélation de mon être-objet pour autrui que je dois pouvoir saisir la présence de son être-sujet.*' To this the obvious objection is that to assume that I am in fact an object for someone else is to beg the question; and if the premise is merely that I have the impression of being observed, this may very well occur without its actually being the case that anyone is observing me. Sartre's

answer to this is that it is true that in any given case in which I think that some particular person is observing me I may conceivably be mistaken; but all that this proves, according to him, is that I may be mistaken about the identification of 'Autrui' with some particular object of my experience; it does not impair my certainty of the existence of 'Autrui' in general. 'En un mot', he says, '*ce qui est certain c'est que je suis regardé, ce qui est seulement probable c'est que le regard soit lié à telle ou telle présence intramondaine*'; and again, '*Qu'est donc, en bref, qui est apparu mensongèrement...? Ce n'est pas autrui-sujet, ni sa présence à moi; c'est la facticité d'autrui, c'est-à-dire la liaison contingente d'autrui à un être-objet dans mon monde. Ainsi ce qui est douteux, ce n'est pas autrui lui-même, c'est l'être-là d'autrui.*' But what is this mysterious Other which is not necessarily identical with any given person? It looks as if Sartre is using 'autrui' as a name, in which case he is making a logical error of the same type as we have detected in his use of 'le néant'. And how can it be certain that I am being watched when it is not certain that anyone is watching me? It may be certain that I have the feeling of being watched, and this may reasonably be taken to involve a belief on my part that other subjects exist. But what we require is a logical justification of this belief; and this, so far as I can see, Sartre makes no attempt to provide.

One reason why he does not provide it is that he tries to avoid describing the situation in cognitive terms. Thus he declares that '*mon moi-objet*', through which the existence of '*autrui-sujet*' is somehow revealed to me, is not '*connaissance*' but '*malaise*', and that the other, the fact of whose existence I realize '*par la malaise*' is not '*connaissance*' either but '*le fait de la présence d'une liberté étrangère*'. But this seems to me a case of what Sartre himself would call *mauvaise foi*. For the question is not whether I do or do not in fact go through the process of inferring the existence of my 'object-self', and 'the other-subject' as its correlative from the manifestation of my 'disquiet', but whether this inference, if I were to make it, would be justified; and if there is no valid ground for making it, then the reference to my disquiet, though it may help to account for my belief in the presence of other subjects, is in no way a guarantee that this belief is well founded. To say, as Sartre does, that '*mon arrachement à moi et le surgissement de la liberté d'autrui ne font qu'un*' or that the other appears to

me 'comme un être qui surgit dans un rapport originel d'être avec moi et dont l'indubitabilité et la nécessité de fait sont celles de ma propre conscience' is surely to beg the question. For let it be granted that I have experiences which seem to testify to the influence of other subjects; they still remain my experiences, and, as such, they cannot possibly be identical with, or even contain, the fact that other subjects exist, still less that these other subjects are free. The most that they can contain is my reflective or unreflective acceptance of these facts, which is by no means the same thing. The existence of others may indeed be posited as a hypothesis to account for certain such features of my experience; but an assumption of this sort will at best provide me only with what Sartre would call '*autrui-objet*'. It cannot justify a belief in the existence of the transcendental subject, '*le moi qui n'est pas moi*', which he is here seeking to establish.

(d) *Our relations with one another*

In the second part of this essay I have given some account of Sartre's idea of the temporal self-pursuit in which a person, as something which exists *pour-soi*, is, by his principles, condemned to be engaged. '*Le pour-soi*', he explains, '*comme néantisation de l'en-soi, se temporalise comme fuite vers. Il dépasse en effet sa facticité—ou être donné ou passé ou corps—vers l'en-soi qu'il serait s'il pouvait être son propre fondement.*' But since it is impossible for the *pour-soi* to be, in the requisite way, responsible for itself, it never succeeds in rejoining the *en-soi* which it both flees and pursues. When, however, one is in the presence of another subject then, according to Sartre, the flight of the *pour-soi*, which exemplifies one's freedom, is objectified by the other and thereby turned into something which does exist *en-soi*, not indeed for oneself but for the other. Thus, '*pour autrui je suis irrémédiablement ce que je suis et ma liberté même est un caractère donné de mon être*'. Sartre says of this turning of my 'flight' into something objective that I 'feel it as an alienation which I can neither transcend nor know'. Nevertheless he insists that I do feel it and that I am therefore bound to adopt some attitude towards it; and it is on my choice of this attitude that, in his view, all my 'concrete relations' with others ultimately depend.

In this position, two main courses are supposed to be open to me. On the one hand, I may resent the fact that the other, merely

by observing me, enters into possession of 'the secret of my being' which he keeps locked up outside my reach; and I may therefore try to repudiate the being which the other bestows on me by the expedient of exchanging our respective rôles. '*Je puis me retourner sur autrui pour lui conférer à mon tour l'objectivité, puisque l'objectivité d'autrui est destructrice de mon objectivité pour autrui.*' Alternatively, seeing that the other in his freedom is responsible for my être-en-soi, I may try to gain possession of this freedom without impairing it. For '*si je pouvais, en effet, m'assimiler cette liberté qui est fondement de mon être-en-soi, je serais à moi-même mon propre fondement.*' In the former case, I am said to 'transcend the transcendence of the other', in the latter, 'to absorb this transcendence in myself, without robbing it of its character of transcendence'. These two projects are logical contraries, and each is brought forward by the failure of the other. Moreover, since they each contain an internal contradiction, both are bound to fail. Thus Sartre depicts one's concrete relations with others as based upon a circle of frustration from which it is impossible ever to escape.

An example of the case in which one tries to 'absorb' another in order to 'recover' oneself is found by Sartre in the experience of love. According to him, what the lover desires to possess is essentially the freedom of the person whom he loves. '*Il veut posséder une liberté comme liberté.*' Consequently, he aims at making himself loved by the other, and it is indeed in the desire to make oneself loved that loving is said by Sartre to consist. But if loving is to be defined in this way, it will follow that the love for oneself which is aroused in the other person will be in its turn a desire to be loved. Thus 'A loves B' means that A desires that B shall love A; but since 'that B shall love A' means that B shall desire that A shall love B, the original proposition becomes 'A desires that B shall desire that A shall desire . . .' *ad infinitum*. Sartre perceives this consequence, but instead of concluding, as one would expect, that there is something wrong with his definition, he takes it as a proof that the enterprise of loving is self-destructive. '*J'exige que l'autre m'aime et je mets tout en œuvre pour réaliser mon projet; mais si l'autre m'aime il me déçoit radicalement par son amour même; j'exigeais de lui qu'il fonde mon être comme objet privilégié en se maintenant comme pure subjectivité en face de moi; et, dès qu'il m'aime, il m'éprouve comme sujet et s'abîme dans son objectivité en face de ma subjectivité. Le problème de mon être-pour-autrui demeure*

donc sans solution, les amants demeurent chacun pour soi dans une subjectivité totale; rien ne vient lever leur contingence ni les sauver de la facticité.' No doubt this escape from contingency is an impossible achievement. But are we really to believe that it is the essential object of love?

The contrary case, in which I try to 'transcend the transcendence' of another by bestowing on the person in question the status of an object is illustrated by the phenomenon of sexual desire. In this situation, my consciousness is said to 'become flesh' in order to bring about the corresponding incarnation of the other. What I wish is to possess the other's body, but not merely as a thing or as an instrument. I wish to possess it as the incarnation of the other's consciousness. But this too, we are told, is an end that it is impossible to realize. For in the physical process of its attainment both my body and the other's become mere instruments in my world, and the other person, the 'transcendence' which I am trying to appropriate, inevitably escapes me. In this extremity my desire to possess the other may develop into sadism, just as the desire to be possessed, and so possess oneself, which is the object of love, may emerge as masochism; but this recurrence to extremes does not save me. The end remains in each case unrealizable because of the inner contradiction of the aim.

It is Sartre's view that these contrasted sexual attitudes, which he treats, paradoxically, as part of the structure of the *pour-soi*, provide the framework of all our social behaviour, so that the primitive circle of frustration is made by him to cover the whole field of human relationships. Not surprisingly, he finds as a result that the other's freedom, which can neither be abolished nor appropriated, may well appear intolerable, and this accounts, in his view, for the phenomenon of hatred, which he believes to be directed, not against any particular human being, but against all other human beings in the person of one. '*Ce que je veux atteindre symboliquement en poursuivant la mort de tel autre c'est le principe générale de l'existence d'autrui.*' But even if I succeed in killing the person in question Sartre holds that I do not thereby attain my end. For, though I destroy his present existence, I cannot abolish the fact that he has existed; and this means, according to Sartre, that my 'being-for-him', which is what I am really anxious to do away with, remains petrified in the past,

and so more than ever beyond my reach. Thus, '*la mort de l'autre me constitue comme objet irrémédiable exactement comme ma propre mort*'; my hatred is cheated of its object by its very success and *le pour-soi*, having failed in this last despairing attempt to emancipate itself from *le pour-autrui*, continues to oscillate indefinitely between the two original attitudes, which have previously been described.

These analyses of human behaviour seem to be of considerable psychological interest, but, to my mind, they are open to the serious objection that they do not correspond empirically to the way that most people actually behave. No doubt, if there were good *a priori* grounds for supposing that people were bound to treat each other in the manner that Sartre describes, we should be justified in looking beyond the empirical evidence, which goes to show that they do not; but this would be to assume the truth of Sartre's general view about the *pour-soi*, which I have already given reasons for holding to be false. As it is, I think that he has given us a fair account of the reasons why certain people feel frustrated and of the forms which this frustration may assume; but neither on logical nor on empirical grounds do I think that he is justified in taking this special type of frustration to be a necessary feature of all human experience.

MEMOIRS OF THE LATE PRINCESSE EDMOND DE POLIGNAC

BEFORE the Franco-German War of 1870 my parents lived in Paris, on the Boulevard Malesherbes, in a large apartment near the Parc Monceau, and there my sister and three of my brothers were born. During the war, at the time when the Commune was impending, my father was advised to leave France, and so came to England with my mother and six children.

He bought a house in Grosvenor Gardens, No. 32, which I remember vaguely, but after spending a year in London he found the winter climate rather severe, and being unable to go to the South of France, went to a most beautiful part of England—South Devon. I still think that there are few spots lovelier than Torbay, with the coloured, rolling countryside that leads up to Dartmoor as far as Tavistock; the surrounding counties seem grey compared to the rich red of the Devon rocks and fields, against which the ilex trees, with their dark green foliage, make even in winter so rich a contrast.

My father decided to settle in Paignton, where he built a house that is now the Torbay Country Club. He died while I was still a child, and it was only when my mother remarried, about 1878, that we returned to live in Paris, where she bought a large house near the Bois de Boulogne—27, Avenue Kléber, which had been built by a Mr. and Mrs. Phalen, Americans who had come to live in Paris many years earlier.

Like most such houses at that time, this contained a great many large reception rooms, some furnished in the Louis Seize or Empire styles then fashionable, and others in the Sarah Bernhardt manner. The principal and largest room—my mother's 'Grand Salon'—soon became a centre for musical and artistic gatherings, and I can never forget that in it I first responded to great classical music. A week seldom passed without the performance of some Quartet, played by the finest performers in Paris on instruments which were then unique and are now, I suppose, unobtainable—for they were all from a double quartet of Stradivarius instruments that my mother had collected after much research.

Thus from my earliest youth I constantly heard all the great works of Beethoven, Mozart or Schubert, including the last Quartets of Beethoven, Nos. 10 to 17, which were then considered almost incomprehensible. The Fourteenth Quartet impressed me particularly, and I remember that on my fourteenth birthday, although I was offered a little watch from Boucheron's or a fan painted by Chaplin, the famous portrait painter, I chose as a present or 'birthday surprise' a performance of my favourite work by Beethoven—the Fourteenth Quartet.

As was usual in large families, the parents decided very early which child should become a musician, a painter, an architect, or

a diplomat; and it was decided that I was not to study music but to learn painting at an *atelier* in the Rue de Bruxelles, conducted by a Monsieur Félix Barrias.

Although I secretly loved music most, painting attracted me almost equally, and I spent all the time possible at the Musée du Louvre, without understanding much of what I saw there, but forming the strongest likes and dislikes, some of which have since been modified by time.

Of course, whilst in Devonshire I had seen practically no painting at all, but at the annual Exhibitions of Modern French Painting in Paris—the then famous *salons* at the Palais de l'Industrie, somewhat similar to the Royal Academy Exhibitions—I disliked the conventional *pompier* paintings then in vogue, which seemed to me then as dull and depressing as they do now.

Besides these annual Salons, it was customary to put up wooden buildings near the Palais de l'Industrie in the Champs Elysees, and the Exhibitions held there were frequented as a curiosity by visitors who went into roars of laughter at the products of *L'Ecole du Plein Air*, and were specially indignant at *les ombres violettes* in the landscape paintings, accustomed as they were to the bituminous and ochre tints of the accepted academic masters. There was a small but determined group of ardent admirers of the new School, and strangely enough I was at once attracted by works which were not only condemned by critics and connoisseurs, but which were always refused admission to the neighbouring Palais de l'Industrie. The works of the Impressionists, such as Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, Sisley or Boudin carried me away. I was thrilled by the beauty of this art which seemed to give me a new insight and throw a fresh light and meaning on all that surrounded me in the visual world. My family did not approve of this new School, and my enthusiasm was at once put down as eccentric, promoted by a wish to excite attention, and deserving only of discouragement. But nothing was ever more spontaneous or sincere, and I was always anxious to learn anything I could about Edouard Manet and his first steps in painting.

Among the frequent visitors at my mother's house was the American painter, Edward May; he was my godfather, a very good-looking and talented artist, who had lived in Paris since his childhood. He had been a pupil of Thomas Couture, whose

enormous picture, '*Les Romains de la Decadence*', is still in the Louvre. Need I say that Edward May criticised very bitterly my admiration for Manet who had studied painting at the same time as himself; he often spoke of him as a 'crank' who had been the laughing stock of all his fellow-pupils, known to the entire painting class as *Le Michelange du mauvais*. I took no notice. At the painting class I attended every day my admiration of Manet was a standing joke, most of the pupils having decided that he did not know how to draw, that his colours were ridiculous and his subjects beneath contempt.

Manet died while I was in my early teens; I was heartbroken, though I had never met him. Summoning up my courage I had gone once to his studio, 77 Rue d'Amsterdam, to ask his concierge to give me the visiting card which was nailed to the master's door; and this I treasured for many years.

A few months later, Monsieur Barrias moved the whole of his atelier to 77 Rue d'Amsterdam, Manet's studio, which was larger than the room in the Rue de Bruxelles, and in this studio I worked for many years. Thus I soon struck up a friendship with the concierge, questioning him on all sorts of subjects connected with the master. One day he showed me a fine pencil drawing of Manet, by Fantin-Latour—the first sketch of his well-known portrait—and consented to sell it.

The concierge's name was Aristide; he was an Indian, and I was much amused when he told me that he occasionally acted at the Théâtre des Arts, Boulevard des Batignolles, specializing in the role of *un traître orientale*.

My ambition was to buy a picture by Manet as soon as I was able to do so. Some time later Ernest Duez (himself an excellent painter) spoke to me of Manet's work 'The Woman in White', which is the portrait of his sister-in-law, Madame Manet, née Morisot, and which he had seen in Madame Edouard Manet's house when he had called there with John Sargent after the great painter's death. I still have the note I received from Duez, telling me that Madame Manet wished to sell the portrait, at a price which now seems incredibly low. No one, of course, at that time thought of buying such a picture.

My instant and spontaneous admiration for the early Impressionists has never changed or wavered. I felt from the first that they were right, and even in the tradition of the great Masters;

but the feeling against them was very strong, not only among the profession and popular artists who taught painting in the Atelier Julien and such classes, but in most families; it was considered eccentric and revolutionary to care for anything outside the Academic painting that held its sway in the annual *Salon*. Baudelaire understood the importance of Manet at once—he was a prophet in every art—but few critics had a good word for the Impressionists' school, and when Manet died in 1882, the most dreaded and the most read art-critic of the day, the great Albert Wolff of the *Figaro*, whose judgement was supposed to be 'final', wrote an article in which, while allowing that Manet paintings were sometimes of interest, ended by these ominous words, 'but what will remain of all his work ten years hence?'

Well, ten years, twenty years, sixty years, have passed, and now Manet's pictures are in every National Museum, in Europe and America, and nothing has tarnished their freshness and vitality, and what remains now of Albert Wolff's opinions or of the works he extolled in his anxiously awaited articles?

Degas was painting the portrait of one of my fellow pupils in Barrias's studio. (This was then in the Rue de Bruxelles, and he lived quite near, in the Rue de Turin.)

With a beating heart I climbed up the dark steep staircase that led to his *atelier*, for I admired his works more than I can say, including his wonderful copies of some pictures in the Louvre, and other early Renaissance pictures by Gentile Bellini and Mantegna.

Degas was painting the portrait of the beautiful Madeleine Fleury and I sat in a corner. At that time my great admiration for Claude Monet and the Impressionists made me feel certain that only painting from nature was admissible, so it was a shock to see that Degas was painting from drawings and that the whole colour scheme of his portrait was chosen from the Persian rug that was near at hand, from which he had composed a palette.

I remember that in speaking of some landscapes that Madeleine Fleury was then painting, he said, to my great surprise: 'To paint a landscape of the sort you describe, the best way would be to take a *toile de vingt paysage*, to paint the sky emerald green, and then put the canvas in a corner, *faire un bon déjeuner* (he was a great gourmet of the old French school), and leave the picture alone for several days.'

Before my dazzled eyes, he brought out over a hundred pictures, sketches, and sepia drawings and I was overwhelmed with admiration, and of course much too terrified to say a word: when the séance was over and we parted, I went downstairs first, and Degas (as I afterwards heard) said to my friend: 'Who was that half-wit you brought with you? She never said a word about my pictures, nor about any of my drawings', and I understood from that moment that, however humble one may be, any great artist expects some praise when showing his work even to the most ignorant visitor.

Sargent was a pupil of Carolus Duran. His early exhibits at the annual *Salon* caused a great sensation. Tall, very distinguished and extremely good-looking, he at once became a conspicuous figure in Paris society. An excellent musician, he was the friend of the young composers, a frequenter of all the concerts, and nearly as much devoted to music as to painting. His first pictures were greatly appreciated, but when he painted the wonderful picture of celebrated beauty, Mme Gauthareau, it was very bitterly criticized, so that he took a dislike to Paris and went to London for some months, where he soon decided to stay permanently. The picture was considered indecent because of the simplicity and extreme décolletage of Mme Gauthareau's black evening dress—for this was the time of puff sleeves and endless tulle. Now the dress looks quite modern and causes no surprise to the visitors to the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

Sargent lived in London in Tite Street for many happy years, surrounded by a circle of admirers and friends. Here he painted his decorative work for the Boston Library and all the great portraits that now hang in the National Gallery or the Tate. Few artists have been more widely and warmly admired, and I have always considered his life a remarkably happy one; and so was his death, for he died in bed in his sleep, his spectacles pushed up over his forehead and in his hands a volume of Voltaire that he had just been reading.

L'école du plein air was superseded by painters who had *Les lanternes tournées en dedans*: to quote Jules Laforgues admirable expression. They created the *surréaliste* and subconscious school, pursuing other objects and aims also, doubtless contained in some of the paintings of the Old Masters. I have never understood why people should be dogmatic about Works of Art, for

if the aims of their creators are different surely they are free to choose any mode of expression they like, and there can be no question of dogma outside of which there is *point de salut* where beauty is concerned, and their work will be appreciated by those who feel as they feel, and see as they see.

But I think that originality differs entirely from eccentricity, and I could never see any novelty in works that combine the dulllest and most antiquated technique, reminding one of every Academy, or of the Boecklin school, simply because there is something unexpected in the composition of the picture—such as three eyes in a portrait, a snail or a lobster or chest of drawers in the middle of a human face, or some other eccentricity that really doesn't matter much; still, as the effect of a work of art depends not only on the work of art but on ourselves . . . even psychologically and physiologically, it is quite reasonable to suppose that these works appeal to many others—and so much the better, for, thank God, there is no hard and fast rule about the beauty of a Work of Art; some great masterpieces have for centuries been admired by those we consider the greatest and best judges, but others, many others, in fact whole schools, have been admired sometimes more or less, at different periods, according to the environments and circumstances that, according to Taine, play such an important part in general taste.

Among those who were always seen at these informal gatherings was Jean-Louis Forain, whose caustic wit was the amusement and terror of Paris at this time. He and his wife had a delightful and very modern house in the rue Spontini, near the Bois de Boulogne, built for them by Grand'Pierre, a young and already much admired architect who afterwards built a house for Jean de Reske and rebuilt one for me in the Avenue Henri Martin.

We often dined with Monsieur and Madame Forain. The top floor of the house was entirely devoted to a large studio in which Jean-Louis often let me sit, and sometimes work, while he drew or sketched, or prepared some of his wonderful lithographs.

Not only was his conversation brilliant, but he had known intimately nearly every great artist of his day, and I eagerly listened to his stories of his life with Verlaine and Rimbaud. They had been great friends of his, and he had for some time shared rooms with them. He had been present at many scenes between them,

out in no way confirmed the general view of the friendship that bound these two great men.

Forain had been very poor and had known the hardest times in his early youth. At that time he had struck up a great friendship with Villiers de l'Isle Adam, the author of the wonderful *Contes Cruels*.

Among the gatherings at the Forains, I remember one on the day that Zola's *J'accuse* appeared, and I am bound to say that Jean Louis Forain, who afterwards showed himself such an ardent anti-Dreyfusard, was greatly impressed by the article, which he read out to me with admiration for the author and indignation at the story he told. Forain was, and always had been, a devout Roman Catholic and one of the few men I knew who believed implicitly in the personality of the devil. Everyone now knows how the *Affaire Dreyfus* grew into something which developed hatred of every kind in Paris; families were split up, husbands and wives parted, and it was not unusual at a dinner to see guests leave the room if anyone appeared of an opposite opinion from their own. That first night Forain was sincerely moved by Zola's arguments, although during the evening he said to me, laughing: 'I have drawn so many comic figures of Jews and it will be so easy for me to continue to do so, that I cannot change my line now; I have no choice but to become an "anti-Dreyfusard".' I am quite convinced that, as time went on, Forain's opinion of the case became really sincere, especially as his nationalist principles grew more and more marked; in his work, as in his thoughts and behaviour, he became increasingly religious and he never failed to take Communion and to observe very strictly the commands of the Church.

When I used to sit in his studio while he did his drawings or lithographs, which were generally on sacred subjects, he would often talk to me about the restoration of famous pictures, deploring that such work should be undertaken by those who had no idea of the technique in which the pictures had been painted. Forain frequently took me to the Louvre, to examine various pictures by the Old Masters, in which one could trace the first preparation: usually in *grisaille*; and he thought that those who restored the paintings would inevitably remove the *glacis* with which the original artists had finished their works—after a most careful preparation.

Gabriel Fauré is so mingled with all my memories of music in Paris that it is difficult for me to know how to begin to speak of him.

I first met him in a very lovely corner on the coast of Normandy, Villerville, near Trouville, a little fishing village close to Pennepie, and the Château de Blosseville where I spent many summers in my early youth. Here a little colony of painters and musicians usually collected to spend the summer months. I constantly met Gabriel Fauré at the comfortable and cheerful house of that excellent painter Ernest Duez, a great friend of Edouard Manet, or in the studio of Roger Jourdain, or of Erraguris, the Chilean painter, and his lovely wife.

Gabriel Fauré was about twenty-eight when I first knew him, and he had already written a number of beautiful songs, nocturnes, impromptus and other piano compositions that he often played to us, and from the first I was enthusiastic about them, for they seemed to me—as they do now, half a century later—worthy to rank with those of Chopin or Schumann. Sargent's drawing of Fauré is well known. It was done several years later, but Fauré had changed very little and with his dark complexion, wavy steel grey hair and wonderful deepset eyes, he had a very powerful expression, and his charm of manner made him instantly sympathetic.

He had already written two quartets, piano and strings, which are both perfect in their way, and are today in the repertory of nearly all the leading quartet ensembles in the world, and there are surely no more lovely works for strings and piano than these. What can be more spontaneous than the First Quartet and the slow movement of the Second—this has always seemed to me one of the most beautiful and original of inspirations.

Gabriel Fauré was born in 1845 at Pamiers in the south-west of France, and studied harmony and counterpoint with Niedermeyer, whose school for organ and composition was considered less severely academic than the Conservatoire, and more respectful of the pupils' natural tendencies. Certainly from his earliest works up to his last, there is a remarkable continuity in Fauré's leading characteristics—the same well defined and infinitely expressive phrases that have remained as pure and melodic as the day they were written. His subtle harmonic treatment of these inspirations has made them invulnerable to time—for, as he sometimes said, '*J'ai reculé les limites de la délicatesse.*'

Some years after I met Fauré he married Mademoiselle Fremiet, daughter of the well-known sculptor, whose equestrian statue of Joan of Arc stands in the Rue de Rivoli near the Louvre. Her two sons were very delicate children—her whole life was devoted to dragging them through various illnesses—but they grew up and one became a great biologist, now a professor at the College de France, the other a popular writer and lecturer.

In later years Fauré became organist at the Madeleine, later again professor at the Conservatoire, and then Director of the Conservatoire, all after having been supposed for so many years to represent the anti-Conservatoire spirit. One of his most gifted pupils was Maurice Ravel.

Gabriel Fauré wrote very slowly, constantly aiming at making his work perfect in form, without losing the spontaneity of the original thought, and I always found him attracted by expressive music and easily bored by works of a too classical spirit. I have often heard Fauré, although an ardent admirer of Bach, speak of some Fugues as utterly boring. But Schumann he particularly loved, and he played most of the piano works better than I have ever heard them played by the greatest pianists. On the other hand he cared little for Brahms—excepting a few songs—and could not bear most of his Symphonies. He first came to London with me in 1896 to give a concert in Frank Schuster's new music room in Old Queen Street, which was to be inaugurated by an orchestral and vocal concert entirely devoted to Fauré's music. It was an unforgettable evening, for the music had been well rehearsed and the greatest artists had gathered together to sing or play. Among other works the exquisite Four-part Madrigal and the Pavane were most beautifully sung and enthusiastically received. Fauré's music had an immediate and very great success; he was surrounded by a group of friends including Sargent, Henry James, Lady Randolph Churchill and her sister Lady Leslie.

Fauré returned to London several times, among others when Forbes Robertson and Mrs. Pat Campbell performed Maeterlinck's *Pelléas and Melisande*, for which he wrote the incidental music, as he had already done for *The Merchant of Venice* at the Odeon.

In 1891 Gabriel Fauré came to stay with me in Venice, where for some months I had taken a small Palazzino at San Gregorio, a lovely little fifteenth-century house that belonged to a Russian,

M. Wolkoff, a very old resident in Venice, a friend of Richard Wagner's who often came to see him.

I carefully prepared a quiet room with a piano as a study for Fauré to work in, but I had forgotten how fond he was of cafés; and I am obliged to say that he wrote his five *Mélodies de Venise* at a little marble table at the Cafe Florian on the Piazza, in the midst of the noise and turmoil of a busy Venetian crowd, rather than in the peaceful room I had arranged for him.

Several Parisian friends were staying with me at the same time as Gabriel Fauré; one of them, Madame Ernest Duez, having a lovely voice, we were in the habit of going out on the lagoon after dinner in a *Peata* (or large fishing boat) and we had got together a little orchestra of five or six musicians. When Fauré brought back nearly every day one of his lovely songs, Madame Duez and the little orchestra rehearsed them on the lagoon, Fauré playing a little portable yacht piano that one of my brothers had given me. And thus I heard for the first time *Mandoline*, *En Sourdine*, and the three other songs that he dedicated to me, and they form the five *Melodies de Venise* that are so beautiful.

I have always thought that no one admired and understood Verlaine better than Gabriel Fauré, for who could translate into music better the wonderful lines of *Mandoline* or *Clair de Lune*? Soon after his visit to Venice, it struck me that I might ask Verlaine to write a libretto in the manner of *Les Uns et les Autres*, for which Fauré would write the music.

I suggested this to Gabriel Fauré, and he gladly promised to collaborate; and, as he knew Verlaine very well, he promised to write to him and to make him understand that of course I would remunerate him for his work. Verlaine replied that he could not consent to be paid, but that he would like me to open a credit for him at his tailors, his bootmakers or some other of his tradesmen. This was, of course, eagerly agreed to, but some time having passed before I heard anything more of Verlaine, I asked Fauré to write to him again, and Verlaine replied that he had not forgotten our agreement and had now chosen the subject that he was to submit to Fauré.

The subject chosen was the end of the *Comédie Italienne* and the scene was a ward in a hospital in which from one bed to another Pierrot, Columbine, Harlequin and others discoursed on

the various aspects of life and love. Verlaine's letter to Fauré, which I have kept, seemed to me promising, and I am sure his libretto would have been wonderful, but I am sorry to say that Fauré refused to write the music, although it would have been a delightful theme that he could have treated marvellously.

Gabriel Fauré appeared at a moment when France was producing a galaxy of brilliant composers such as Emmanuel Chabrier (whose influence became very great after 1918) Saint-Saëns, Duparc, Chausson, Messager, Lalo, Vincent d'Indy, who all were fervent admirers of Richard Wagner, though some became less enthusiastic as time went on. Fauré on several occasions came to stay with me in Bayreuth, and I remember that he deeply admired many pages of the *Walküre* and the *Meistersingers*. How often he spoke to me with warmth of the last scene in the *Meistersingers*, when after Walther's *Preislied* the people turn to Hans Sachs, the Poet, and sing the glory of his art, and their love and gratitude. I remember how much he was moved by this, and years after, at the close of his life, when he was at the height of his fame, Fauré, now bowed down with age and nearly stone deaf, was present at a concert in his honour in the great hall of the Sorbonne. At the end of the concert all those present turned spontaneously towards him with overflowing hearts, and many with tears in their eyes; he could neither hear the music nor the loud applause, but he stood there in the balcony looking down with an unutterably melancholy smile on his handsome face. It was the last time I saw him, and I remembered how moved he had been at Bayreuth when we had heard the great scene together at the end of *Meistersingers*.

He had a keen sense of humour and was intensely alive to the absurdity of the pretentious; but although he was sensitive and sentimental, he was easily carried away by new affections, and was not always a faithful and perfect friend, being too much interested in new ties to trouble much about his old ones. No one could resist his charm of manner, his gaiety, his tenderness, above all his utter sincerity when a new fancy took his heart and mind, as it too often did.

In his last years, Fauré's songs and chamber music became more and more subtle and melancholy. With a few exceptions some of his earlier works like *The Requiem*, *Theme and Variations*, the *Nocturnes*, the *Bonne Chanson* and songs like *Parfum Imperissable*

and *Soir*, besides those I have already mentioned, remain to my mind the most flawless examples of his genius.

Emmanuel Chabrier, whom I knew about the same time, was very different. Short, rather stout, but very active, and in fact never still, he was a typical Méridional. He had spent most of his life as an official in the Ministère de l'Intérieur, and began to compose only when he was past fifty. Anyone who has heard *Les gros Dindons* or *Les Cochons Roses* will know that his music is full of colour and vitality; and this was at once recognized in his early irresistibly sparkling composition *España*: which enjoyed a popular triumph. He had already written a certain number of songs, an operette in one act called *L'Etoile*, now often performed at the Opera Comique in Paris—extremely comic, and originally written to be performed by students in the studio of one of his friends. Chabrier was a great admirer of Richard Wagner—and a great friend (among other artists) of Van Dyck the great Belgian tenor, then principal tenor in Bayreuth. He had long been a great favourite of the Parisian public at the Pasedeloup, and other Sunday concerts, in which works by Wagner were often played.

A few years ago a book was published containing Chabrier's letters, many of them addressed to Ernest Van Dyck, and nothing can give a better idea of musical life in Paris about 1885 than these witty letters. He speaks in them of a musical evening at my house, in which a great many parts of his new opera *Gwendoline* were given for the first time in Paris—though the very enterprising Theatre de la Monnaie in Brussels had already performed *Gwendoline* some months before.

When I suggested giving a concert in Paris in which the principal parts of *Gwendoline* would be heard, with a reduced orchestra and chorus, Chabrier could not believe his ears, and at once asked most of his musical friends such as Vincent d'Indy, Gabriel Fauré, and Ernest Chausson to take part in it, and in a letter to Van Dyck he speaks of this performance in which he played the piano, Gabriel Fauré the harmonium, and Vincent d'Indy the *Timbales* or tympany.

It was a great success, although the public naturally thought the music extraordinarily modern and advanced. It was for this concert that Gabriel Fauré orchestrated his beautiful *Clair de Lune*; and other works by d'Indy and Chausson, now well known, were heard then for the first time. Emmanuel Chabrier was a

remarkable pianist. He was most enthusiastic and energetic, and very often after playing the whole act of an Opera before dinner, he had hardly swallowed the last mouthful and smoked a cigarette, when he would suddenly remark '*Il y a longtemps qu'on n'a fait de la musique*', would fly to the piano and play again for an hour or two, singing every part of the score: tenor, bass or soprano, at the top of his voice, and rendering on the piano the sonority and tone of a full orchestra. In any discussion, especially on a musical subject, he became extremely violent, most enthusiastic about what he admired, and beside himself with anger at anything he disapproved. He would tear them to pieces with a rich flow of language, full of fantasy and wit, and pour forth torrents of abuse often irresistibly comic. He would end by saying that there were two sorts of music in his opinion, or as he expressed it, '*Il y a la musique: puis la musique que... c'est pas la peine.*'

He could never keep still and was very fond of dancing. Often in the middle of an argument he would break off and seizing some female member of the party, dash off in a waltz or polka.

Although he was such an admirer of Richard Wagner I remember that when he joined me one year at Bayreuth he could not bear the religious side of *Parsifal* and predicted that it would be the first of Wagner's operas to grow old. But most of the *Ring* delighted him beyond measure, and even in *Parsifal* there were parts that he greatly admired. In particular he had a great admiration for the Prelude, and I remember that at a certain moment he exclaimed during the performance. 'Ah! I have longed to hear that A flat for the violoncellos for more than ten years, and now I hear it at last'—but he had never been able to come to Bayreuth before, and of course *Parsifal* was never performed anywhere else at that time.

His deep delight at hearing that A flat—and all the enchantment and even amusement he derived from this week in Bayreuth—made me more convinced than ever that the appetite for life, great works, beauty of art or nature, cannot be bought at any price, and that the Cook's Tourist highbrow millionaires who thronged to Bayreuth in later years, if they didn't lack Chabrier's appetite for things, certainly missed all his enjoyment and fun. The picture gallery of the great millionaire may contain many Botticellis whose meaning and beauty remain invisible to the

vision, but will he understand beauty felt by the woman who sweeps the carpet?

Chabrier's music has had an immense influence on all French composers, especially in the period between 1910 and 1940, and all his operas: *L'Etoile*, *Gwendoline*, *Le Roi malgré Lui* and his posthumous work *Briseis*, have been revived at the Opera or the Opera Comique, and the beauty of his *Ode a la Musique* and of his piano works and songs is more and more apparent as time goes on.

After Debussy's death in 1917 there was a marked reaction from his refined and impressionist style, and the coming age clamoured for more rhythmical and spiritual music. Jean Cocteau's book *Le Coq et L'Harlequin* had a great influence, and a group of six composers was founded under Cocteau's direction. Paulenc, Darius Milhaud, Auric, Durey, Germaine Tailleferre and Honegger formed the group, and their first concert was given in 1919 at the Théâtre des Vieux Colombier—a concert that caused an immense sensation and called forth much criticism and the same sarcastic remarks that had in 1885 been applied to Chabrier and Fauré's music—in fact the same things that have always been expressed whenever anything new appears in any art.

There are no longer literary or political salons in Paris such as there were in the second half of the nineteenth century. Towards 1880–1890 one of the most celebrated was that of the Baronne de Poilly. Her good-looking son, Gaston de Brigode, had married a sister of the Duc de Gramont (Agénor), and the beautiful Corisande helped the Baronne to receive her guests at the weekly literary dinners at which Emile Augier the doctor, Professor Robin, and Professor Dieulafoy were frequent guests. There was also the young and much sought-after Paul Bourget, whose recent novel, *Cruel Enigme*, had startled and captivated Paris. Léo Delibes, the author of several delightful ballets, was also to be seen, and the philosopher Professor Caro, of the French Academy, was nearly always present. He held a very conspicuous place in Parisian society and had great influence, though his philosophy was often laughed at by the younger and more independent philosophers of the day. It was easy to recognise him as the hero in the brilliant play *Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie*, that was then being played at the Comedie Française.

Barbey d'Aurevilly was constantly to be seen at these dinners

and his remarks on various subjects, or even on his fellow guests, were the amusement of Paris. At one of the dinners Professor Robin came in rather late and announced very gravely that a great Academician, Emile Augier, had died that day. There was general consternation, and the usual expressions of regret, ending by '*C'est une perte irréparable!*'—to which Barbey d'Aurevilly remarked '*En effet c'est une perte irréparable pour le ridicule français—car il était puissamment organisé pour la bêtise.*' Barbey d'Aurevilly wore most unusual clothes, though they probably did not look quite so eccentric in those days as they would now. He affected to wear a lace jabot and very complicated waistcoats of silk, with some old Louis XVth design, with buttons made of amethysts or rhinestones. Paul Bourget told me that when Barbey appeared at one of these dinners in a particularly striking costume, he made some admiring remark: '*Que vous êtes beau ce soir: Monsieur d'Aurevilly:*' and got only this reply: '*Je suis simplement poli.*'

The salons of Madame de Poilly were second only to those of Madame Oubornon, but here only one guest at a time was allowed to speak, the hostess having a small hand bell which she rang if anyone tried to interrupt a story. It got about in Paris that on one occasion a young soldier suddenly tried to interrupt another guest who was speaking, but was sternly silenced by Madame Oubornon. When the orator had finished his story, Madame Oubornon turned to the guest who had so rashly intervened and said: 'Now Monsieur, it is your turn to say what you wanted to say just now'. To which he simply replied, 'It doesn't really matter, dear Madame, it is now too late. I wanted to ask if I might have a few more peas—they were particularly good this evening.'

In these days, when women wear short hair and need a hairdresser only to do an occasional 'Permanent' or setting, it is hard to believe that in 1897 the 'Marcel Wave' caused a great sensation in Paris; very long hair being the fashion, it was a tedious obligation to have it waved by Marcel himself (though he was so sought after this was nearly beyond all hope!) or by Loisel, who besides being a very fashionable hairdresser, was also hairdresser at the Opera and at the Comedie Française. As the process of hairdressing lasted a very long time, I always asked Loisel for news of the next productions at the big Theatres, and on one occasion I

inquired what he thought of Wagner's *Meistersinger*, to be produced at the Opera within a few days. I have always liked the *spécialiste*, who sees things and events from the point of his particular *spécialité*.

Loisel replied: '*Eh bien: Princesse: je vais vous dire: Les Maitres-chanteurs: c'est vraiment bien peu de chose—une malheureuse coiffure au troisième Acte: pas plus. Parlez-moi de la pièce du Châtelet—il y a pour quatre-vingt mille francs de cheveux dans cette pièce-la!*'

He then went on to tell me that his dream was to exhibit an 'Ophelia' at the next Exposition Universelle—Ophelia in wax would be lying on a dark blue velvet background, her long hair streaming behind her, with an incomparable Marcel wave, and ornamented with poppies and cornflowers, and perhaps a few ears of wheat, to denote her madness.

One of the most interesting Salons I ever knew in Paris was that of the sculptor, René de St. Marceaux and his wife. They lived in the Boulevard Malesherbes, and every Friday there used to be an informal reception, after an excellent dinner. Nobody who had not exhibited a piece of sculpture or a picture, or who was not a composer, a scientist or an inventor would ever be invited to these gatherings, to which no simple 'mondain' or mere social star was admitted.

I could fill pages with the names of all the remarkable people I met in this Salon. It was there that I first saw Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy; the latter had just sent from the Villa Medici in Rome the beautiful music he had composed for Rossetti's *Blessed Damsel*. He had been awarded the Prix de Rome some years before, and I had always been surprised that he had obtained this academic distinction discerned by the '*Institut*'. I was interested to learn later that Charles Gounod had been very influential with the jury and had ardently pleaded the cause of the young and totally unknown composer.

When he first frequented the St. Marceaux Salon, Debussy's appearance was most striking; his short nose and deepset eyes, his fawnlike features and rather curly black hair and slight beard gave the impression of an Italian model, especially as his complexion was very dark and he sometimes wore small plain gold hooped earrings.

At that time Bayreuth attracted all composers, who were greatly impressed and influenced by the wonderful music of

Richard Wagner, and it was therefore a great surprise to me to hear Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel declare that this music did not stir them in the least, and that they much preferred the clearer, more delicate and simple form of Russian compositions, of which they gave us then and there many examples.

Claude Debussy and Andre Messenger used to play a *quatre mains* many scores that delighted us; Messenger, the author of *Véronique* and a number of other charming works, was an excellent pianist, and so was Debussy. We never tired of hearing them play.

Among those who crowded round the piano were Gabriel Fauré, Chabrier, Vincent d'Indy, Colotte (who was then thin and frail and newly married to Gauthier-Villars—'Willy'—whose criticisms of the Sunday concerts, signed *Lettres de l'Ouvreuse*, were feared by all the young composers), Jean-Louis Forain, Pierre Louys, Chausson and sometimes Sargent and Claude Monet. Music, books and pictures were discussed among them all, until the night was almost spent.

Sometimes the evening was devoted to a Bach cantata, the soloist as well as the choir being found among the guests.

Maurice Ravel wrote shortly afterwards the music of *Ma Mere l'Oie* for the Theatre des Arts, and about the same time composed the beautiful *Pavane pour une Infante Défunte*, which he dedicated to me. I was much surprised and deeply touched that he should have attached my name to these lovely pages.

Maurice Ravel had always preferred to keep away from Parisian life, and lived in a Louis Philippe cottage at Montgort l'Amury some miles from Paris, where I sometimes went to see him. He always avoided any official honour. He refused to be a member of the *Institut* or a Knight of the Legion of Honour. He always remained the greatest friends, although he rarely came to Paris.

A few years ago, when a concert was organised by my professional musical friends at the Salle Pleyel, and the programme comprised only works that had been written for or dedicated to me, Maurice Ravel was kind enough to conduct the orchestra when it played this Pavane. After the concert a few friends joined me and the Princesse Ilinsky, who, I imagine, had never heard of

him before, as she was not very interested in music. At one moment they seemed to be in very deep conversation, and when I asked, with some surprise, what could be the subject of their serious talk, Ravel turned and said 'Oh! we are talking about death'—an answer that surprised me, especially as they seemed in the highest spirits when they finished their discussion. Some months later I was deeply moved to hear that Ravel had shown symptoms of the terrible illness that ultimately put an end to his life—an abscess on the brain—and for over a year he was slowly losing his memory; he knew too that he could never recover, and I often thought what a great mark of friendship he had given me, and also of the strange subject of his conversation at that supper party—the last time that I ever saw him.

As time went on, Debussy's works were greeted with increasing admiration; he revolutionized music in Paris and the group of his disciples and admirers grew continuously. But when *Pelléas et Melisande* was produced at the Opera Comique in 1901, sung by the unforgettable Mary Garden with Jean Pellier and Vieulle, it was very badly received by both public and critics. Even the most 'up-to-date' writers laughed at it. Perhaps owing to Maeterlinck's words, many parts were received with peals of mirth. Its passionate sincerity, undeniable beauty and dignity made it invulnerable, and it was given over and over again before a more and more determined and fanatic audience. Time has since made this opera seem even more wonderful, more human and more poetic.

I remember that Gabriel Fauré did not like *Pelléas et Melisande*: and remarked to me after the first performance, '*Si c'est là la musique: je n'ai jamais compris ce qu'était la musique*', but I suspect that he was partly influenced by the fact that Debussy had married Madame Sigismond Bardac, to whom Fauré had dedicated *La Bonne Chanson*, and to whom he had been deeply attached.

Debussy was still young when he was stricken by a severe illness, which obliged him to give up work in Paris. He spent his last summer at St. Jean de Luz in a charming cottage built by an English family, a cottage in which I myself afterwards spent many happy months. I saw a letter written by Debussy to a friend, in which, speaking of the English atmosphere surrounding him, he says, '*Je crois toujours rencontrer Monsieur Pickwick dans l'escalier.*'

Because his death took place during some of the darkest days of the War of 1914-1918, it passed almost unnoticed, and only a few attended the funeral of this man who had so enriched the world of music and to whom we owe so much.

During a brief holiday in Italy with my painting master and his wife, Monsieur and Madame Felix Barrias, I had paid a flying visit to Venice, and was so thrilled with the beauty and peace of that wonderful city that my one idea was to return there. When, therefore, my youngest brother married a charming American in the following year, I at once suggested that we should take a house in Venice together for a few months, and spoke to him of a lovely little Palazzo on the Grand Canal, at the Tragheto San Gregorio—the Casa Wolkoff; for, like the Casa Dario next door, it was not really an entire Palazzo, but half only, and so simply called a *Casa*.

The Casa Wolkoff belonged to an eminent Russian writer and photographer, Count Wolkoff, a great friend of Richard Wagner, who had been a constant visitor there during the long years he spent at the Palazzo Vendramin, where he died in 1882.

We spent about four months in this delightful residence, where we were soon joined by many Parisian friends—including Gabriel Fauré and the gifted artists, Duez and Georges Clarin. I spent my time painting on the lagoon, copying in the neighbouring Museum—the Accademia—or in the big studio that formed the top floor of the house, with an extensive view not only of the Grand Canal but also of the Giudecca. This attractive Casa was afterwards inhabited by the great Duse, in the days of her romantic attachment to Gabriele d'Annunzio—days of which he wrote later in *Il Fuoco*.

I did not return to Venice for many long years, and when I did so it was with Edmond de Polignac, who was at once fascinated, as I had been, by the radiant beauty of the city. One day after we had lunched with Mr. and Mrs. Curtis at the Palazzo Barbero on the Grand Canal, he pointed out the enchanting façade of the Palazzo Manzoni, which was opposite, and exclaimed: 'Ah! that is the place to live in, and we must manage to get it in one way or another!'

The next morning I went to see an agent, who told me that there could be no question of our buying the Palazzo, which was inhabited by a rich South American who was living there very

happily with a great friend. But the course of true love rarely runs smooth, and a few months later the same agent came to see me in Paris and revealed that as the result of a quarrel the South American was leaving Venice, and the sale of the Palazzo was not impossible.

For more than forty years I spent several months each summer within the old walls of the Palazzo Manzoni, which had become the Palazzo Polignac.

Before the hideous Hotel Excelsior was built on the Lido and a long stretch of sandy beach had been reserved for its clientele, before the 'invasion' of fashionable visitors from every Continent during the bathing season, Venice was a quiet restful city, especially in the warm weather, when the old Hotel des Bains attracted only a few amateurs of sunbathing and a few families with numerous children. In those days the Venetian 'palaces' were not expensive, excellent servants were easily obtained, and life was very comfortable even for people with small incomes. In consequence many artists, composers and writers lived on or around the Grand Canal, in more or less luxurious surroundings.

Robert Browning lived in the magnificent Palazzo Rezzonico, and died there. The Spanish painter, Fortuny, Horatio Brown—who lived on the Giudecca, Sickert, whose studio was on the Calle dei Preti, were among those who spent many months in Venice; and among others who lived in larger apartments, or who occupied entire palaces, were Lady Layard, the Countess of Radnor, the Countess de la Baume and the lovely Lady Helen Vincent, whose Palazzo Giustimani was perhaps the most beautiful in all Venice. Mr. and Mrs. Curtis lived in the Palazzo Barbaro, near the Grand Canal, while Mr. and Mrs. Byard and the beautiful Miss Muriel Wilson were at the other end, near the station.

Among the visitors during the season were many composers and writers of the day—French, Spanish, English and Italian. The evenings were spent at one or other of these charming houses, and it was no rare thing to hear a Mozart Quartet or a great pianist or singer at some small informal gathering in one of the fine *salas*.

Life in Venice was then absolutely delightful. The Countess de la Baume lived in the lovely Casa Dario, next to the Giardino Barbier, which was at the back of a marble palace that had been

begun in the seventeenth century and left incomplete, so that only the ground floor was finished and the large terrace overlooking the Grand Canal. On this terrace we often dined or had coffee in the afternoons.

The Countess de La Baume had made the Casa Dario a marvel of comfort and good taste and had filled it with the finest pictures and the most precious books and musical instruments, and here congregated the *fine fleur* of Parisian art-lovers. I sometimes met at the Casa Dario the Comtesse de Noailles, and her wonderful and gifted sister the Princess Alexandre de Caraman-Chimay, for whom the then youthful Marcel Proust had written a long dedication and preface in his recently published translation of Ruskin's *La Bible d'Amiens*. Léon Daudet, then very young and one of the most brilliant and cultured men I have ever known, was a constant visitor, as was also Henri Gonse the collector, and the great poet Henri de Régnier and his talented wife, the daughter of the famous Heredia and herself a celebrated poet. They spent many months at a time at the Palazzo Barbier, where a few rooms had been repaired and made comfortable for the guests of the Comtesse de la Baume. After her death, the Marchesa Casati took the Palazzo Barbier—or, rather, the ground floor of this unfinished palace—and there gave a series of fancy dress balls that are now legendary. At one of these balls, held at the time the Russian Ballet was at the height of its glory, she appeared at the top of the steps leading to the garden, in a wonderful costume designed by Bakst, with a tiger stretched out at her feet. The tiger had been drugged, but it was nevertheless extremely frightening, as one came up from a peaceful gondola, to find it lying on the steps of the palace. At the end of the party some of the guests took the tiger on to the Piazza, where quiet citizens who were leaving the theatres were terrified at its appearance. This incident provoked general censure.

But Venice was no longer the quiet city I had previously known. It had become the scene of many noisy parties given by excitable millionaires who seemed to have no respect for the homeland of Monteverdi, Marco Polo, the great Morosini, Goldoni and the endless list of wonderful painters, composers, travellers and writers who have made the glory of this lovely place. The Venetians themselves began to feel that their city was being treated as a sort of Casino—not of the elegant sort we are

accustomed to see in Venetian pictures, but a casino like that of Deauville or Monte Carlo.

One year, in memory of my husband, who had known Richard Wagner, I thought of asking the Duke della Grazia, the owner of the Palazzo Vendramin, if he would allow me to have the Funeral March from *Siegfried* played in the courtyard under the windows of the room in which the great composer had died. The Duke consented, and was gracious enough to give a very large afternoon reception, to hear the Banda Municipale play the Funeral March from *Siegfried* in the Cortile of his Palace.

It was a bright, sunny day in the early part of the year, and the Grand Canal looked its best; all the neighbouring houses had decked their balconies and windows with the brilliant hangings which were usually brought out on great occasions, and many of the best-turned-out gondolas in Venice (belonging to the great patrician families of Venice)—at least a hundred—guided beautiful ladies to the steps of the Vendramin Palace. The Banda Municipale played the Funeral March very creditably, the guests crowding round the windows that looked on to the Cortile, and after the concert there was a buffet in the big central room or sala. I thanked the Duke profusely for all the trouble he had taken to have my wish carried out, and asked him how many years Liszt and Wagner had been his tenants. He replied: 'Oh, quite a long time—for seven years, at least, off and on; they spent many months here.' 'And did you often see them?' I asked. 'Oh, yes, they frequently came up to have coffee with us after dinner.' I was much impressed, and added: 'And what did they do, and what did they say?' 'They sometimes talked about music, or played the piano.' 'Oh, how marvellous to have known these great men. What a wonderful experience!' The Duke replied, casually, 'Oui, c'étaient deux originaux.'

I thought of Browning's words:

'Ah, did you once see Shelley plain?
And did he stop and speak to you?
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems and new!'

It is difficult now to imagine the surprise and enchantment of the Parisian public when Diaghilev first produced his Russian Ballet. For a year or two I had met this wonderful man at the

Grand Duke Paul's. The Grand Duke Paul of Russia and his charming wife Princess Paley had a lovely house in Boulogne, at the very gates of the Bois. I often dined there; everything was perfect: their cuisine was celebrated. The guests were always sympathetic, and conversation was often varied by delightful music, quartettes or songs, and singing by Reynaldo Hahn or Jean de Reszke. Among the guests I often met a tall, energetic-looking young man with a white lock in the midst of his thick black hair, who was no other than the great Serge Diaghilev, to whose marvellous will-power, energy and utter disinterestedness we owe the revelation of Russian theatrical art.

He had opened an exhibition of modern painting in St. Petersburg, and one year he gave a concert of Russian music in Paris and a lecture on Russian Art. But it was only some time later that he brought the whole of his unsurpassable Ballet to Paris, with such stars as Nijinsky, Pavlova, Karsavina, and the beautiful Ida Rubinstein.

For many years Diaghilev came to Paris, sometimes producing an opera like *Boris Goudonov* or *Ivan le Terrible* with Chaliapin, and sometimes a new ballet by some young and much-discussed author; among these was Igor Stravinsky.

From the first it seemed to me impossible not to recognize the importance of this new genius, and I still think he dominates all others who have appeared for more than a quarter of a century. No one has escaped his influence; though, as usual, his imitators are often most obnoxious. No one who was present at the first performance of *Le Sacre du Printemps* can ever forget that evening, for there was a real battle in the Théâtre des Champs Elysées. The howls of some, the applause of others, went on for an hour—the orchestra reduced to silence. Here and there someone would rise and shout out his views at the top of his voice, each party abusing and insulting the other in the most violent way.

I was present each time a ballet was given, and until the end of the Season the same riotous scenes took place, sometimes lasting for more than an hour, the orchestra being reduced to silence. Still the army of admirers grew stronger and stronger, and Stravinsky was overwhelmed with applause when the curtain finally went down.

When the war of 1914 began I happened to be in England, staying with friends in Surrey. Soon I returned to Paris, where

I was lucky enough to be able to help the great Madame Curie in some of the most interesting work that she had undertaken. But in the midst of all these tragic circumstances I had not forgotten my musical friends, and in the winter of 1915-16, knowing that Stravinsky was in Switzerland, I wrote asking him to see me when he returned to Paris. He had settled with his family at Morges, being a charming peaceful little town between Lausanne and Geneva, where I had often been to visit Paderewski who had a beautiful house there for many years.

My intention at that time was to ask different composers to write short works for me for small orchestra of about twenty performers. I had the impression that, after Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss, the days of big orchestras were over and that it would be delightful to return to a small orchestra of well chosen players and instruments. Stravinsky agreed, and suggested setting at once to work on *Renard*—the plot being by a Swiss poet for whom he had a great admiration—Ramuz.

During the coldest months I went to Lausanne to see many friends of various nationalities; the shores of the Lake of Geneva were then, as they are now, haunted by refugees, neutrals and 'observers'.

I often saw Stravinsky, who had taken a house at Morges, where he lived with his wife and family and numerous pale, fair-haired young children. One night he asked me to dine, and came to fetch me, as it was half an hour's journey by train from Lausanne to Morges. Everything was covered with snow and so quiet in the clear moonlight night, so still, that it was not very cold. I shall always remember the happy impression I had as Stravinsky took me into his house, for it looked to me like a Christmas tree, all brilliantly lit up and decorated in the warm colours that the Russian Ballet had brought to Paris.

Madame Stravinsky was a striking figure: pale, thin, full of dignity and grace, she at once gave me the impression of nobility of race and grace that was confirmed by all she did in the following years. In the warmth of her charming house she looked like a princess in a Russian fairy tale; surrounded by her delicate children, then, of course, very young. But although everything was so friendly and kind, there was an atmosphere of tragedy about the family which turned out to be only too justified, for all were more or less inclined to suffer from lung trouble, which ended

pitifully for Madame Stravinsky and one of her daughters quite recently.

I can never forget the delight of that evening at Morges: the table brilliantly lit with coloured candles, and covered with fruit, flowers and desserts of every hue. The supper was a wonderful example of Russian cuisine, carefully prepared by Madame Stravinsky and composed of every form of *zakousky*, then *bortsch*, tender *sterlets* covered with delicious transparent jelly and served with a perfect sauce, various dishes of fowls and every sort of sweet, making it a feast to be always remembered.

I spent the last years of the 1914 war at St. Jean de Luz in an exquisite little house on the top of a hill, in which Claude Debussy had lived the year before. In front there was a cloister with a wonderful view reaching away to the plains and mountains. The house was built in the Basque style and contained a large music room in which that perfect pianist, Ricardo Vinez, would play to me all the most wonderful pages of Debussy, Albeniz or Ravel—he had worshipped these composers long before they became well known to music lovers. Earlier he had done much to make Fauré and Chabrier known to the public. He devoted himself to this duty just as Jeanne Bathori had dedicated herself to the propagation of their music for the voice in earlier years. Modern French music of the beginning of the century owes much to Ricardo Vinez and Jeanne Bathori. It was through Ricardo Vinez that I got in touch with Manuel de Falla, for whose work I had the greatest admiration. I wrote to him in Spain and asked him if he would consent to write a work for small orchestra and voices that I could produce in my house in Paris.

Directly travelling became possible again I went to see him in Spain and spent many happy hours in his little house in Granada, where, in his simple room containing a table, a few chairs and a small piano, he composed those torrents of poetical and voluptuous music that moved us so deeply. This seemed to contain the very essence of Mauresque Spain, and especially of Granada and the Alhambra he loved so much, with its strange mysterious glades and the haunting sound of its ever-gurgling waters.

Falla lived with an old unmarried sister. They led a truly monastic life. He was very religious; he held strong political views, conservative and royalist; his hatred and indignation when any modern or democratic opinion was expressed amused me

very much. He was well below medium height, thin like many Spaniards, and, with his hard, emaciated features and dark complexion, he always seemed to me like a figure carved out of walnut or a mediæval saint in discoloured stone.

While I was in Granada I spent an evening with him in the garden of the Alhambra where he took me one night with Segovia, the finest of Spain's guitarists. The garden was empty, and it was a beautiful moonlight night. Falla chose a place where we sat for hours listening to the strange old Spanish music that Segovia played on his guitar as Falla asked—and I can never forget the incomparable beauty of those gardens steeped in music and moonlight.

The work he was writing for me was called *Retablo*. I often saw him in Paris, where he came from time to time. In 1923 he came to conduct the first performance of the *Retablo* in my concert room, where a little stage had been built and the scenery painted by a pupil of Picasso. Besides the principal singers, the part of the Reciter was sung by a young Spanish boy from the Spanish Church in the Avenue Hoche, and the beautiful music for harpsichord was played by Wanda Landowska, for whom Falla had also written the poetic and wonderful Concerto for Harpsichord that she played so often in Paris.

The audience consisted of composers, critics and the usual first-night Parisians, and a box on one side of the room was filled by Spanish friends who had all donned seventeenth century Spanish costume. The orchestra was conducted by Falla himself, and the *Retable* had a well-deserved and triumphant reception. He often told me that he composed mostly on his long walks round Granada—these long walks were the preparation for work in the little room—he often said to me: 'Je compose en marchant.'

Once he came to Venice for a Musical Festival and again conducted the *Retablo* and kindly allowed me to be present at most of the rehearsals; at the last rehearsal I was surprised to see him appear at the conductor's desk his dark face covered with a number of small tufts of cotton wool, but it turned out that he had been badly stung by mosquitoes during the night and had carefully covered each sting on his face with a small wad of cotton wool dipped in ammonia, and had either not troubled or forgotten to remove them before the rehearsal.

What I knew of Erik Satie was that he was born at Honfleur in Calvados, and that in the early 'nineties he was considered to be a curious, rather humorous figure connected with Sar Peladan who had formed a Rosicrucian Order, the Knights of the Rouge Croix. This strange man was often to be seen at concerts and exhibitions, attracting much notice with his pale emaciated face and long Assyrian black beard, usually clad in a Persian costume. He was held in high esteem and extolled as one of the greatest writers of his day, his novels being written in the noblest language and the most perfect French prose. He at once chose Satie as the official composer of the Rosicrucian Order, and it was during this time that Satie wrote many pages of wonderful music for the various functions and festivities of the Knights.

At the same time he wrote other things that caused endless amusement because of their odd titles—*Morceaux en forme de Poire* or *Musique d'ameublement*. His indications of expression or tempo were still more curious—*Sans exaltation sacrilège* or *Comme une bête*.

Nothing could be more simple and poetical than the Greek dances *Gymnopédies* or the *Noisettier* and many of the beautiful piano duets in *Morceaux en forme de Poire*.

I was very anxious to know Satie, and I intended to ask him to write music for the Death of Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo*. I asked Jeanne Bathori to bring him to dinner one evening. He was then a man of about 52, neither tall nor short, very thin, with a short beard. He invariably wore pince-nez, through which one saw his kindly but rather mischievous pale blue eyes, always ready to twinkle as some humorous thought crossed his mind. I remember that the dinner included roast tongue, which he found particularly good, and when I asked him if he would have another slice, he at once answered, 'Oui, oui, avec plaisir mais... pas la tête, je vous en prie, car je pourrais la tête de veau.'

Satie had spent most of his life at Arceuil, quite near Paris, and for over thirty years had never allowed anyone to enter his room. When, after his death, Sauget, his pupil, and another friend at last entered it, they told me that the dust, books, music, and accumulation of every sort of thing was incredible. At one time of his life Satie had worked under Vincent d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum in the Rue St. Jacques, to learn the rules of fugal composition, and here he often surprised his fellow pupils

with the liberties he took with the rules of counterpoint. He told me that they constantly said, 'This is all very well, but you will see what it leads to when you are older—vous verrez'; but Satie invariably replied, 'Mais aujourd'hui j'ai cinquante-deux ans, je ne vois encore rien.'

At the time when I met Satie I had been learning a little Greek and was becoming more and more enthusiastic as I managed to read the tragedies of Euripides or the Dialogues of Plato in the original text. Satie was equally enthusiastic, so he decided to write music for the *Death of Socrates*, and after much thought suggested that the scene should be set in a small salon in the Empire Style in which, in armchairs, Madame de Wendel and Argyropoulo who knew Greek perfectly, and I myself, would read in turns the glorious words of Plato. At first this seemed an excellent idea, and we spent many evenings talking it over, but in the end Satie decided to give up the idea of the Empire Salon and to have no scenery at all, and he wrote an oratorio for a woman's voice and a small orchestra. There is no doubt that this is his masterpiece, and nothing could be more moving than this music written for the beautiful words of Plato. When he had finished it he sent me the score, which is now in Paris in my collection of musical manuscripts. Jeanne Bathori sang *Socrates* for the first time in my music room accompanied by the ethereal music of Satie. Soon after that Satie fell very ill, and we sent him to a nursing home where I saw him for the last time in 1929. He was the gentlest and kindest of men, and was adored by his friends and by the little pupils who surrounded him at Arceuil and formed the *Ecole d'Arceuil*, in which Sauguet was the most prominent figure.

One of his great friends was the poet Léon-Paul Fargue who was, in his way, a modern François Villon, the most eloquent, truculent and original poet of the animated group connected with the Académie Goncourt. He and Carco were the poets of Montmartre and sang the glories of *La Vie de Bohème*, mixing the language of Villon with that of Aristide Bruant of the *Cabaret du Chat Noir*. Fargue was one of the leading contributors to *Commerce*: that invaluable publication which presented new works by the most brilliant young authors of the day.

Once I had taken a yacht to go from Marseilles to Venice, and I had asked Fargue to join me and some members of my

family on this short cruise along the South Coast of France to the heel of Italy. He was delighted to come, and was not deterred by my telling him at once that strict punctuality was to be observed by all on board as we had very little time for our journey, and every day I used to say, 'Tomorrow morning we shall be off Nervi: the launch will be ready at 9.30 to take us ashore, and we start back early in the afternoon.' Invariably as the launch glided away with the rest of the party soon after breakfast, we would see Fargue, dishevelled, rushing up on deck waving his arms frantically, having just awakened after a night spent on deck looking at the stars in the summer sky and drinking endless whiskies and sodas. I am sure Fargue saw nothing between Marseilles and Venice except in his imagination, which apparently was quite sufficient, for he wrote a most wonderful description of his cruise in the *Zara*.

At one time he had quarrelled with the Count de X, who had given a marvellous party at his house in Paris, at which some of Fargue's poems were recited. I forget exactly what caused the trouble, but it became so embittered that it was decided a duel must be fought. Count de X was an excellent host, and his parties were the best in Paris, but he was not a great scholar, and his spelling was often at fault. When he challenged Fargue, Fargue replied that he was quite willing to fight a duel, but that as the offended party he had the right to choose the weapon, and he added, 'J'ai la choix des armes et je choisis l'orthographe—vous êtes mort.'

The last time I saw Fargue, he told me that he had left his old house far away on the Canal St. Martin and that he had taken a new apartment in the Montparnasse quarter where he very kindly invited me to dinner, for, he said, 'I now have a cook a faire loucher les dieux', but of course I knew Fargue well enough to understand that both the apartment and the cook were purely figments of his imagination, and in fact he had taken a small room in an hotel in the Boulevard St. Germain, where I hope he has remained.

I first knew Reynaldo Hahn in the early 'nineties, while he was doing his *service militaire* at Versailles, for he used to come to the delightful parties in Madeleine Lemerre's¹ studio, to which

¹ A flower-painter, very fashionable in her time, who illustrated Proust's first book, *Les Plaisirs et les jours*.

she invited not only *toute la société Parisienne*, but also all the artistic world of musicians, painters and writers.

Reynaldo Hahn and that excellent pianist Edouard Risler were both doing their *service militaire* and used to appear at these parties in uniform, and play and sing until any hour of the morning: as both were wonderfully gifted, it was a joy to hear them perform all sorts of music, for they were ardent admirers of the classics and all the more modern music we cared for in those days.

Reynaldo not only had an exquisite voice, but sang in the perfect way composers have, which seems quite natural or untaught. No one ever thought, 'How did he take that note—was it from the throat or from the diaphragm?' or 'Was that trick taught by Jean de Reszke or by Madame Marchesi or some other great teacher?' It did not matter at all how the note was taken, for it was always exactly as one imagined the song should be sung, and I do not think I have ever heard anyone except Reynaldo and Dame Ethel Smyth sing in this way: a way that no one can ever forget who has heard them perform.

Later on our acquaintance developed into a real friendship, and I constantly saw Reynaldo Hahn, whose early works delighted me, especially the *Etudes Latines*, the *Bal chez Béatrice d'Este* and many settings of words of Verlaine and *Le Ruban Dénoué*.

He was a great admirer of Gabriel Fauré, of Gounod and Bizet, whose *Adieux de l'Hôtesse Arabe* he sang in the most moving and unforgettable way. In Paris and in Venice we spent innumerable evenings together performing every sort of music—French, German, Italian or English. I remember him, for instance, singing Gounod's beautiful setting of Byron's *Maid of Athens*. Reynaldo also sang the music he himself had written for poems of Robert Louis Stevenson.

Year after year in Paris I constantly gave concerts in my music-room, and, although music by Bach or Schubert or Mozart was nearly always included in the programme, new works by young composers were very often heard, some of which must have sounded very strange to the patient audience, though many have now become well known and familiar. As some of these concerts Reynaldo's name appears on the programme coupled with his new Concerto for Piano or some other composition—but whether because he was no longer very young, or because the new generation had musical aims which he did not like, he

developed a certain aversion from the most advanced young composers and for many years hardly ever came to my concerts.

Some years ago I met him and reproached him laughingly for this. He frowned, and in a half-laughing way replied, 'Until my dying day I shall always hate everything you like in music', to which I said that one cannot hate Mozart, Bach or Schubert, and that their music was always played at my concerts. 'Yes, possibly,' he answered, 'but you are too fond of the *va de l'avant*, and I absolutely cannot stand their ideas.' Upon which we decided to lunch together and talk over our differences of opinion. I remain very grateful to Reynaldo. I treasure his friendship, and admire his wit.

SELECTED NOTICES

TWO SOVIET POETS

Stikhi o Voine, Ilya Ehrenbourg. Moscow, 1943. pp. 77.

Zemnoi Prostor, Boris Pasternak. Moscow, 1945. pp. 48.

Antonii i Kleopatra, Boris Pasternak. Moscow, 1944. pp. 148.

THE war has inspired a large quantity of poetry in the Soviet Union. Though much of it is necessarily ephemeral and will lose its value when the burning interests of today are no longer urgent, there is much, too, which has more lasting claims and deserves attention from all lovers of good poetry. The Soviet war-poets have abandoned the Futuristic methods of Mayakovsky which were popular in the 'thirties and have reverted to simplicity and sentiment. They study the great masters like Pushkin and Lermontov and write directly about the fundamental issues raised by war, about the death of friends, the destruction of homes, the desire for justice or for revenge, the beauty of the countryside in all the devastation of battle. This poetry is truly popular both in its inspiration and in its appeal. It reflects the feelings of the Russian people, and it is sold in thousands of copies throughout the Soviet Union. The proletarian art which even Lenin thought to be almost an impossibility has become a reality and challenges comparison with the best poetry written anywhere else in Europe. Indeed, no other European country has produced so much good verse during this war, and those who complain that the Soviet system is hostile to artistic creation would do well to consider this remarkable and impressive achievement.

The range and variety of this poetry can be seen from two small volumes by eminent Soviet writers. Both Ilya Ehrenbourg and Boris Pasternak have reputations outside their own country, and both have turned their experience of war into poetry. Though both are of the same generation, their art is remarkably different, and a comparison between them is illuminating for any study of literature in the Soviets. Ehrenbourg is pre-eminently a popular

novelist and journalist. His novel on the fall of France showed his gift for realistic reporting, and his many articles in newspapers have made him a favourite with the Red Army, whose spirit he has reflected and interpreted. In England there is a tendency to regard him as a Russian Vansittart, an advocate of war à l'outrance, whom even the Soviet authorities have at times to rebuke. We might therefore expect to find little in his poetry except reflections of his more violent feelings. But Ehrenbourg is more interesting and more complex than this. There are two sides to his personality. The fierce patriot is matched by a poet who possesses not only power but sensibility and insight and even tenderness. Those who know only the public Ehrenbourg will be surprised to find in *Poems on the War* a different person, more subtle, more human and more just.

In *Poems on the War* Ehrenbourg includes much that lies outside a purely Russian vision of the world. He has little bombast, almost no boasting. His four poems on the Spanish Civil War show that he is not only a good European, but a champion of the humble and oppressed. Six pieces on Paris in 1940 reveal a writer of a different calibre from the well-known novelist and show how behind his observant and meticulous realism Ehrenbourg really feels the significance of a tragic disaster whose results are not yet fully appreciated. In *London* he feels both the horror and the splendour of the *blitz* in 1940. But even more revealing are his poems about Russia. At times he bursts out with furious imprecations against the enemy who has ravaged a beautiful land and done enormous damage to a life which had just begun to realize its possibilities. But even these moments are tempered by others more temperate and more striking. Ehrenbourg may hate the Germans, but at least he understands them and can write almost with detachment about them, as in *The German Soldier*, which Mr. Alan Moray Williams has translated in *The Road from the West*:

From childhood he'd been melancholy and methodical,
 loved order, never got bad marks at school,
 earned his small pittance, worked long hours.
 They said to him: 'Henceforth the whole world's yours'.
 He learned to kill blindly and systematically
 and went from corpse to corpse—relentlessly.
 Land, precious land, they promised him,
 and corn and gold and sables fine.
 Now he lies here. There's blood upon his chin;
 and his white hand a scrap of earth is clutching,
 as if even in death he would retain
 the foreign earth that had deluded him.

This quiet little poem is the work of a man who really knows the German character and needs no rhetoric to drive his lesson home.

Boris Pasternak is a poet of a very different kind. He is first and foremost a poet, and his art makes few concessions to public taste. After the magnificent output of his early years he has not written much poetry, and it is significant of his devotion to his art that in the intervals of creation he has perfected his technique on translation. From the poets of Georgia he has turned to Shakespeare, first *Hamlet*, then *Romeo and Juliet*, and now *Antony and Cleopatra*.

He is surely one of the greatest translators who have ever lived, even in Russia, the home of great translations. His version of *Antony and Cleopatra* proves that genius can achieve the impossible and transpose the poetry of one language into another without losing any of its essential qualities. A pedant might claim that Pasternak shirks some of the greater difficulties and interprets some vexed passages with too decisive a spirit. But his translation is intended for the stage, and he is right to make decisions rather than leave ambiguities. What matters is the poetry, and in Pasternak's Russian this flows in a full Shakespearian flood. The magnificence, the variety, the inexhaustible vitality, the 'high Roman fashion' are all here. The three last acts have a peculiar brilliance and beauty in their new dress, and it is not surprising that the Russian public should love Shakespeare when it is presented to them in so faithful and so noble a form.

Translation is only a side-line in Pasternak's work. He is one of the most original and powerful poets now alive in Europe, and any new work from him is a great event. *Terrestrial Space* is only a small volume, and some of it has already appeared in 1940 in the almost unobtainable *On Early Trains*. But here are some of the finest poems that have been written in Russia for ten or fifteen years. Admirers of Pasternak's early work, so brilliant and provocative, may be surprised and perhaps disappointed by his latest manner. Pasternak is now fifty-five, and he has lost some of the exuberance and fire of youth. His poetry is easier to understand than of old. Its texture is less closely knit, less packed with suggestion and association. His imagery is less original and less wilful. The change in style corresponds to a change in spirit. The emotions of his earlier poetry were dynamic and fierce; he is now meditative and gentle. When in *Pines* he treats a subject similar to that of his early *In the Wood* and tells of a couple who lie in the shade, oblivious of the outer world and the passing of time, he is less intense than of old but he has found a new ease and harmony. The end comes with less paradox than of old, but is no less effective when he contrasts the self-contained contentment of the couple with the busy life not far away:

And so the darkness grows, and slowly
The moon sinks all as in a grave
Whether beneath the foam's white magic
Or the black magic of the wave.

The waves swell ever louder, higher;
The public, where the drag-nets lie,
Crowds round a notice on a pillar,
Invisible to the distant eye.

So, too, when in *False Alarm* Pasternak treats the tragic feelings awoken by autumn as he once did in *Spasskoye*, the emphasis now is less on a mysterious sense of impending doom than on purely human emotions which stir in him when he hears a mother weeping in a cemetery. Pasternak's new poetry has a finish and balance and ease which accord with contemporary tendencies in Russia, but are no less a natural development of his earlier

manner. He keeps his wonderful sensibility to all visible things, his great gift for stating sensations with surprising exactness, but age has mellowed him, and his feelings are not so strange as they once were.

Pasternak has always been a poet of physical nature. He began with an almost pantheistic conception of it and dramatized its changes as the work of wayward spirits who bore an odd resemblance to human beings. He saw himself almost as the plaything of natural forces and felt that both as a poet and as a lover he released hidden powers which came from the heart of nature. He is still a poet of nature and still keeps his intense awareness of all its manifestations. But he has tempered his old vision with experience, and is now content with quiet results. One of his most charming poems is *Thrushes*, which is almost purely descriptive in his own inimitable way, until it ends with something that is very like a moral:

Such is the shady den of thrushes,
Who in the shady pine-wood live
As artists ought to live. I also
Take the example that they give.

It looks as if, in other circumstances than the present, Pasternak would have been content to be almost a Wordsworthian poet of nature, deriving his subjects and his strength from close contact with it and looking on it with an eye which nothing escapes.

This independent and withdrawn position has been assailed by the war, and the second half of *Terrestrial Space* contains thirteen poems inspired by it. They are not at all like the ordinary Russian poems about the war. This is partly because while poets like Simonov and Kovalenkov are younger men who have seen war as it really is and shared the experiences of fighting men, Pasternak has been kept by his age behind the lines and driven back to his own knowledge of what war means to those who play no direct part in it. In these poems he shows little of that dramatic power which he showed in *Year 1905* and he makes no attempt to go beyond his own experience. These poems are personal and show how the war has touched him. They have their moments of charming pathos when he describes neglected gardens and deserted parks whose guardians have more pressing work to do; they have, too, many moments of noble exaltation when Pasternak praises the heroes of Leningrad and Stalingrad and gives them their proper place in the history of the human spirit. But behind these contemporary topics we can still discern his old dynamic view of life, his trust in the Russian mission and in the advent of a new, vigorous life, and the book rightly closes with some noble verses in which, with the coming of spring, he sees life returning to a half-dead world and foretells a future full of beauty and romance. Pasternak's poetry has not perhaps so immediate a 'social use' as that of many of his contemporaries, but he is none the less a powerful poet of the Russian world and has done more than anyone to interpret the deep trust in life and nature and humanity which inspires its prodigious achievements.

C. M. BOWRA

p o l e m i c

will be a symposium of philosophy, psychology, æsthetics and sociology. The name **polemie** has been chosen because it suggests that we intend to encourage an exchange of opinions and ideas rather than to make propaganda for any compact system or predetermined outlook.

We assume that if language is finite, and if existence is infinite, every verbal proposition will be limited in its truth; and also since speech is inherited from the unscientific and magical past, its whole structure and vocabulary must be suspected to be less than precisely accurate as a means of explaining the universe. It follows that certainty, expressed in words, may always be false and reactionary.

Difference of opinion will therefore be understood as a natural reflection of the unlimited intricacy of the world we live in, and articles from more than one point of view, on a given subject, will be printed in each number. At the same time, the editorial policy will not be quite unprejudiced; it will assume that separately during the last fifty years there have been four revolutionary developments which are significant for the future of human thought and behaviour:

- 1 The discovery of the unconscious by Freud
- 2 The tendency of philosophy, as a subject, to develop into a science of verbal meaning (semantics, symbolism, logical positivism)
- 3 The trend in the arts away from representation towards expression and construction
- 4 The evolution of marxism as the Faith of tens of millions of people in Europe and Asia.

polemie will be a medium for discussing these developments in relation to the theoretical issues of the day. Unfortunately the general election has postponed the production of the first edition until 1 September. **polemie** will be edited by Humphrey Slater, and published by Rodney Phillips at Premier House, Dover Street, London, W.1, at two shillings and sixpence a copy. The contributors will include:

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